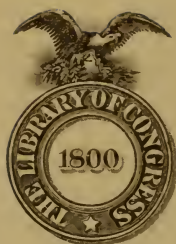


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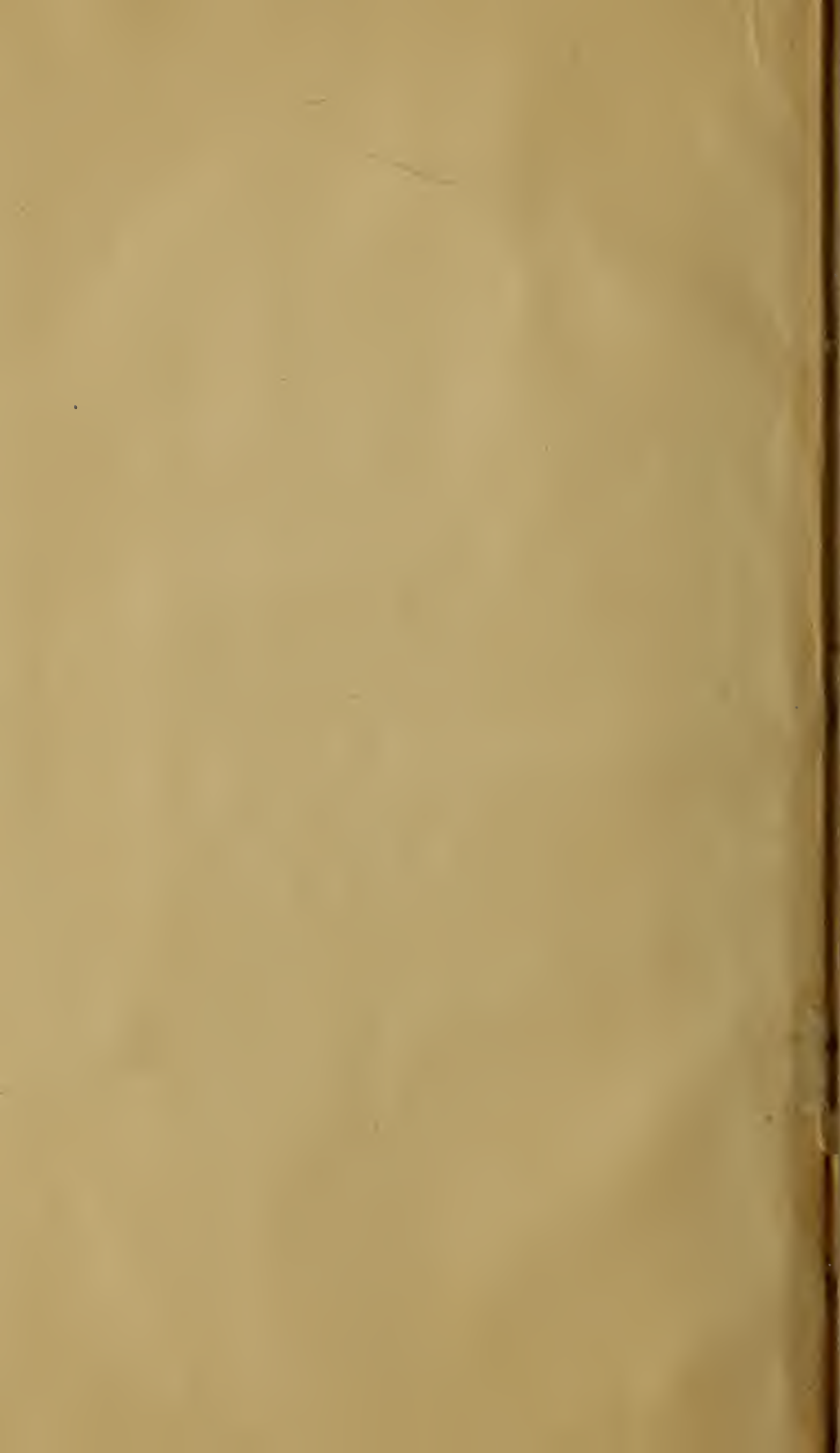
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*Taylor, John Edwards . 1*

# NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS,

Critical and Explanatory,

## ON THE PAPERS

RELATIVE TO THE

INTERNAL STATE OF THE COUNTRY,

RECENTLY

PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT: 117

To which is appended,

### A Reply

TO MR. FRANCIS PHILIPS'S

*"Exposure of the Calumnies circulated by the Enemies of Social  
" Order, and reiterated by their Abettors, against the Magis-  
" trates and the Yeomanry Cavalry of Manchester and  
" Salford."*

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BY

A MEMBER OF THE MANCHESTER COMMITTEE

*For relieving the Sufferers of the 16th of August, 1819.*

---

Et errat longè meâ quidem sentiâ  
Qui imperium credat gravius esse aut stabilius  
Vi quod fit, quàm illud quod amicitîâ adjungitur.

*Ter. Adelphi.*

Id quidem, ego, etsi tu neges, certè scio  
Te inscientem atque imprudentem, dicere ac facere omnia  
Tot peccata in hac re ostendis.

*Ter. Heaut.*

---

LONDON:

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TO THE

**HON. HENRY GREY BENNET, M. P.**

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SIR,

IN dedicating to you the ensuing pages, I take a liberty, to which I am only encouraged from knowing the anxiety you feel, that the prevailing disposition to attribute to the labouring classes, designs which they have never entertained, and to misrepresent their actual conduct, should be exposed, and its mischievous tendency counteracted.

Within the walls of the House of Commons, no one has exerted himself more laudably, or with greater effect, for this purpose, than you ; and if I succeed in giving to your powerful arguments any additional confirmation, my hopes will be satisfied—my intentions fulfilled.

You, Sir, upon a recent occasion well observed, that “ the people of England were not now to be governed in the same manner as a century ago ; ” and in the true spirit of this declaration, you have endeavoured to expose and to put down that strange anomalous system of local government to

which circumstances have here long subjected us, and of the existence of which, the events of the 16th of August were a mere manifestation.

The restrictive Bills, which are now passing through the British Parliament, I believe owe their existence to a determination to maintain and uphold that system in this neighbourhood, the previous operation of which has created every pretence that can be urged in their favour, and which, if I am not deceived, will, in its future proceedings, far transcend all that the most strenuous opposers of those military measures had considered within the probable range of their mischiefs.

No friend to the maintenance of well-regulated freedom can regard, without great jealousy and suspicion, the investing of any Magistrates with such discretionary powers, as are conferred by the "Seditious Meetings Bill," and the "Search for Arms Bill;" and no one who knows the natural tendency of uncontrolled power to degenerate into gross abuse, or who understands the constitution and the character of a great part of the magistracy of this district, can look forward to the execution of those acts without considerable apprehension and alarm.

It is satisfactory however to reflect, that though the Magistrates may receive ministerial thanks and parliamentary sanction, there is another bar at



which they must plead—another tribunal before which they will be summoned, whose decisions, influence cannot guide, nor power overawe. Public opinion has stamped an indelible character on the transactions of the 16th of August, and will rigidly scrutinize the future conduct of those with whom originated the proceedings of that day.

The dreadful mass of misery which the dispersion of the meeting by military violence has caused, cannot be conceived of, by those whose knowledge of the subject is wholly gathered from Newspaper details. If I were to relate but a small part of what I have personally witnessed, the public would feel, that, though there may have been errors or misrepresentation in individual cases, there is no ground for imputing to those who have written or spoken upon the affair, a general disposition to exaggerate.

Your private virtues and your political independence are well known to, and correctly appreciated by, the most enlightened portion of your fellow countrymen. And I am persuaded that those whose good opinion you would most value, fully concur with you in thinking, that on that melancholy occasion, to which the following pages owe their origin, the outrage offered to common humanity, and to constitutional law, was equally undeniable and alarming.

That you may long continue to maintain that high station amongst the friends of public liberty, which an honest estimation of your talents and your exertions has assigned to you, is my anxious wish. Entreating your pardon for this intrusion,

I have the honor to be, Sir,

With great respect,

Your most obedient Servant,

**THE AUTHOR.**

*Manchester, 18th Dec. 1819.*



## P R E F A C E.

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I HAD determined to publish Observations and Notes, on the papers presented by Ministers to Parliament, relative to the internal state of the country, before Mr. Francis Philips's Pamphlet came out. For it seemed to me of importance, that the public should be aware, upon what insufficient and how frequently upon what false statements, the good character and loyalty of the inhabitants of this extensive and populous district had been impeached.

A Reply to Mr. Philips's "Exposure," &c. was a not unnatural addition to my original plan; and I decided more readily upon noticing that pamphlet, because I might thereby have an opportunity of introducing facts and reasonings, which could not be easily connected with mere comments upon the parliamentary papers, but with which, in order to furnish the means of forming a just conclusion upon subjects that have created such unexampled interest, it was necessary that the Nation should be acquainted.

I cannot pretend to view recent events here, merely as a citizen of the world. I cannot undertake to assert, that my judgment has been wholly freed from the influence of my political opinions. But I hope I know myself sufficiently to render it neither unsafe nor presumptuous for me to say,

I am not capable of wilfully suppressing any fact, whatever might be its operation, even upon an argument I desired to establish; and that no local occurrence, sufficiently authentic and important to influence public proceedings, would be likely to escape my notice.

I wish it to be distinctly understood, that whatever I may say in the subsequent pages, respecting Mr. Francis Philips, will be meant to apply to him exclusively as a writer and a politician. I disclaim all intention of treating him with personal disrespect. But it affords little prospect of ultimate agreement with a writer, when the first page of his Preface contains a statement, not to be disputed as matter of opinion, but to be directly contradicted as untrue.

I am not about to charge Mr. Philips with designed mis-statements, but they who undertake the "exposure of calumnies," should take care to be free themselves; not merely from the imputation of calumny, but of ignorance. Mr. Philips says, in reference to the "declaration and protest," that, "notwithstanding the persuasive arguments of the leaders, whose exertions were indefatigable, the total number of signatures amounted only to 320 names." It is true, that the number of names advertized in the Manchester papers, was not more than Mr. Philips has mentioned; but the number of persons by whom the "declaration and protest" were signed, was *more than ten times as great*; in other words, between five and six thousand: and it is further true, that the document itself, with the whole of the names subjoined, was printed and published in the shape of a small pamphlet, long before Mr. Philips's "Exposure" came out. It is, however, certainly possible, that Mr. Philips may have been unacquainted with this fact. Should it be asked, why the whole of the names were not advertized in the newspapers, I answer, it was thought better to put them into a more permanent shape; and also, that as *our political*

*expenses are not paid out of the poor's rates*, economy was necessarily kept in view. If I mistake not, Mr. Philips will understand my allusion.

To the revilings, which Mr. Philips applies to those by whom the "declaration and protest" were signed, I consider it beneath me to reply. As the character of those gentlemen can be in no danger from his attacks, so, neither could I serve them by the obtrusion of a defence.

But if it be matter of complaint in Mr. Philips's estimation, that at the time our document was signed, the "passions excited at the instant" of the meeting, "could not have given way to reflection," what upon his own principle can be said in favour of the meeting at the Star Inn, held on the 19th of August, for the purpose of thanking the magistrates, military, &c. five days before the declaration and protest was drawn up? Oh, that of course was "*a most respectable and numerous meeting*"—"the large room at the Star Inn was *crowded*. Since 1812, when *the last public town's-meeting was held*, and the Exchange windows and furniture destroyed, I do not recollect a fuller attendance (parish meetings of ley-payers excepted,) and in point of respectability, I never witnessed one superior to it." So, by its managers, this assembly was designated as "a numerous and highly respectable meeting of THE inhabitants of MANCHESTER and SALFORD, and their NEIGHBOURHOOD;" they meaning thereby falsely to insinuate, that the inhabitants at large knew of, or recognized, the meeting, or would have been permitted to attend it; when the fact is, that no public notice of it was given;—that invitations were addressed exclusively to those who were supposed to be favourable to the object of it;—that those who did not approve of its views, were repeatedly requested to leave the room; and that all deliberation or discussion on certain points was exclusively forbidden. The "*large*" room, where this delec-

table assembly took place, measures about twenty-six feet by fourteen, and more than one-sixth of its space was occupied by furniture. My informant assures me, he could have walked with ease to any part of it. There could not, therefore, have been more than one hundred persons present; and indeed he thinks there were not more than seventy or eighty. But even taking the number of one hundred, the proportion would not be greater than about one in fifteen hundred of the inhabitants of that district, as emanating from which, these resolutions are attempted to be palmed upon the Nation.

Mr. Philips intimates, that there was not "at the time, the slightest idea that the conduct of the Magistrates could have been censured." When he wrote that sentence he knew, he could not but know, that the meeting was adjourned from the police office (where it was originally appointed,) to the Star Inn, precisely because one individual by whom it was notorious that the conduct of the Magistrates was blamed, had taken his station in the room.

Mr. Philips no doubt, is better qualified than any other person to give us a confession of his political faith, but I may be permitted to express my regret, that in the self-drawn sketch with which he has favoured us, I have not been able to recognize a trace of the original. What claim he can make out which will entitle him to be considered "the friend of liberty, the advocate of the people's rights," I do not know; but I am sure, that within my recollection, no one measure of domestic policy, calculated to extend or to secure "the people's rights," has had the support of that party to which he is considered to belong. Of every act of intimidation, restriction, and severity, against the people, they have been the advocates; and I am not aware that there is a single measure of ministerial policy (unless the corn bill be considered such) of which they have not been the firm and ardent



supporters. When the constitutional laws of the country have been suspended, when the property, the character, and the liberty, of individuals, instead of being protected by law, has been held by the mere discretionary sufferance of orange-club Magistrates; these measures not only have been sanctioned by their approval, but, unless public report be widely wrong, sometimes adopted at their suggestions.

To enter into the great question of Parliamentary Reform, would here be out of place. But certainly the doctrine of "Annual Parliaments, Universal Suffrage, and Election by Ballot," from the strong hold which it has obtained in the minds of the people, deserves to be better refuted, if it *can* be so, than by the flippant common-place assertion of Mr. Philips, "that the first is madness, the second child's play, and the third roguery and intrigue."

Holding the conviction that a much less *radical* reform would secure the objects of most reformers, and give the people an effective controul in the House of Commons, I must yet say, that I have never seen what appears to me to be valid reasons against the abstract propriety of the most extensive scheme; and I certainly think, it would be far more becoming in those by whom the doctrine of "Annual Parliaments, &c." is opposed, to furnish us with arguments against their eligibility, than to content themselves with abusing that large portion of the community by whom such a reform is desired from a conscientious decision in its favour.

I would also enforce as strongly as I can, the propriety of putting the most favourable construction possible, upon the general demeanour of the people. There are sufficient furious and unreasoning zealots on each side. Moderate and sensible men, therefore, ought to discriminate between individuals guilty of personal improprieties of conduct; the

mass from which the former should be considered as the excrescences. I have not a word to say in defence of the presumption, vulgarity, and violence, of some self-styled reformers, on one hand; but I certainly do think the inhumanity, the ignorance, and the rancorous bitterness of many anti-reformers, equally inexcusable on the other. Indeed, there is no class which exhibits such a compound of injurious and unamiable qualities, there is none less fit for public business, or more fond of interfering in it, than a plebeian aristocracy. With more pride than the natural aristocracy of the country, they have less knowledge and less liberality.—With a rank that commands, and a character that deserves, less respect, they are far more intolerant and assuming, and there are few, very few of them, to whom power is entrusted, that “bear their faculties meekly.” If I had given as many proofs of this assertion as the transactions of the last four or five months would have enabled me to adduce, my demands upon the patience of my readers would be too great; but there will be found in the ensuing pages sufficient examples to testify the truth of my remark.

Mr. Philips, as the posthumous expositor of Mr. Pitt’s principles, assures us, that that minister would “not have *conceded* an iota; never would have *reasoned* with any mob, nor with any body of men that attempted to succeed by intimidation.” Suppose this to be the literal statement of a fact, what is it to us? But neither Mr. Pitt, nor any other minister, can controul circumstances; and however imposing and high-minded Mr. Pitt’s assumed course of conduct may appear to Mr. Philips, its prudence and its propriety may yet be very questionable. A just man (but unfortunately ministers of state seldom are just men) would inquire whether the wishes of the people were reasonable, and their demands those, with which they had a right to claim compliance; whilst a prudent man would attempt, by the influence of reason, by every kind conciliatory argument, to withdraw

them from the pursuit of objects, injurious or unattainable ; and not rush wantonly into that conflict with the most numerous class of the population, of which, though the result might not be doubtful, the consequences must necessarily be tremendous. But the fact is, that when the people were silent as to reform, the mere statement that they were so, was held to be a sufficient answer to all the arguments in its favour. And now that all, or at least a majority of our labouring population, has loudly demanded a change in the representative system, the cry for that change is to be stifled by brute force, because the people have not uttered it precisely in the *tone* most agreeable to the delicate and sensitive nerves of the advocates of existing abuses.

I am fully aware, that there are many other points connected with the subjects of which the following pages treat, that it might have been desirable to notice ; but it was of importance that I should lose no time in submitting to the public such observations as circumstances seemed most particularly to require. I was in hopes that I might anticipate some of the new ministerial enactments ; but I now find that, before my pages issue from the press, we shall be “living under a very different constitution, from that of England.” Mr. Canning may remember having once used that phrase, and when the “libel bill” and the “search for arms bill” obtrude themselves upon his recollection, perhaps he may admit that they are but too illustrative of the truth of the assertion, particularly if he should ever learn what a conscientious inquiry after truth could not fail to teach him, viz. how base are the misrepresentations,—how baseless the pretences, to which the liberties of Britons have been sacrificed.





OFFICIAL  
CORRESPONDENCE,

&c. &c.

---

*New Bailey Court House,  
Salford, 1st July, 1819.*

My Lord,

AS Magistrates of this district we feel ourselves called upon to communicate to your Lordship our impressions upon the present state of affairs within the reach of our observation. We are far from wishing to yield to unnecessary alarm : but when we entertain serious apprehensions, we cannot refrain from making them known to your Lordship.

We feel a difficulty in *stating* to your Lordship *any specific facts* upon which *legal responsibility* will attach to any particular individuals at present, but upon the *general view of the subject* we cannot have a doubt that some *alarming insurrection is in contemplation.* (A)

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(A) The magistrates, in the conclusion of this paragraph, most completely lose sight of their premises. No "alarming insurrection" could be in contemplation without "legal responsibility," and that of the highest character, attaching to many individuals. Nor is it possible that the magistrates could be in possession of any evidence, to *justify* them in assuming the probability of "an alarming insurrection," without their being fully able to denounce and to *convict* those who were engaged in forwarding it.

Of the deep distresses of the manufacturing classes of this extensive population, your Lordship is fully apprized ; and the disaffected and ill-disposed, lose no opportunity of instilling the worst principles into the unhappy sufferers in these times, *attributing their calamities*, not to any event which cannot be controuled, but *to the general measures of Government and Parliament* ; and when the people are oppressed with hunger, we do not wonder at their giving ear to any doctrines which they are told will redress their grievances.

Although we cannot but applaud the hitherto *peaceable demeanour* of many of the labouring classes, yet we do not calculate upon their remaining unmoved. *Urged on by the harangues of a few desperate demagogues, we anticipate* at no distant period a GENERAL RISING ; (B) and *possessing no power to prevent the meetings which are weekly held*, we, as Magistrates, are at a loss how to stem the influence of the dangerous and seditious doctrines which are continually disseminated. To these meetings, and the unbounded liberty of the press, we refer the principal weight of the evil which we apprehend.

We believe, on Monday next, a meeting will be held at Blackburn, *and on the following Monday at Manchester*, at both of which Sir Charles Wolseley is to preside. As THE LAW NOW STANDS, WE CANNOT INTERFERE WITH THESE MEETINGS, notwithstanding our decided conviction of their mischief and danger. We are most anxious to

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(B) Why is it that the magistrates, who are compelled to admit and "applaud the hitherto peaceable demeanour" of the people ?—why is it, that they *will* fret themselves with fears of future disturbance ? Without saying any thing in approval of the "harangues" of those whom they stile "desperate demagogues," I am quite incredulous as to their having ever recommended "a general rising ;" but, if it be true they did so, and that the magistrates "anticipate" that such an unhappy event would take place, is not the fact, that no communication upon the subject was made to Parliament, a decisive proof, that ministers did not credit the information of the country magistrates ; Parliament having sat until the 13th of July ?

do every thing in our power to preserve the *peace* of the Country, but upon this most important point we are UN-ARMED. (C)

We have the honour to be,

Your Lordship's most faithful  
and obedient Servants,

J. SILVESTER.

R. WRIGHT.

W. MARRIOT.

C. W. ETHELSTON.

J. NORRIS.

Lord Viscount Sidmouth.

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*Birmingham, July 5, 1819.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose, for your Lordship's information, the copy of an advertisement circulated throughout the town of Birmingham, calling for a public meeting on Monday next. Your Lordship will not fail to observe the day and the hour fixed for this meeting, *both of which are well calculated for the collection of a crowd of persons, many of whom will be FAST APPROACHING TO A STATE OF INTOXICATION, and therefore more easily inflamed to acts of violence by the speeches which will no doubt be addressed to them.* (D)

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(C) The admission here, is most important : neither the *law* nor the *character* of the meetings was changed between the 1st July and the 16th August ; and if, at the former period, the magistrates were, as they state, "*unarmed*," where do they look for—whence do they derive—the legal justification of their proceedings at the latter ? This paragraph proves, also, that the intention of holding a meeting at Manchester, was known several days before the order for sharpening the swords was given, even according to the statement of the yeomanry.

(D) Thus, by these official gentlemen, every thing is presumed *against* the people. They do not suspend their opinions until they have the evidence of facts before them, but calculate on the probability of crime, with the eagerness of wistful anticipation.

I am informed that applications have been made to Sir Charles Wolseley to preside, and to Wooler, Johnson, and others, to attend.

I have the honour to be,

Your Lordship's very obedient Servant,  
ISAAC SPOONER.

The Viscount Sidmouth,  
&c. &c. &c.

#### TOWN'S MEETING.

On Monday July 12, a meeting of the Inhabitants of Birmingham will take place at *three o'clock* in the Afternoon, at the New Hall Hill, for the purpose of considering of the best means of obtaining the representation of the people of Birmingham in Parliament, and also the representation of all the unrepresented inhabitants of the empire.

Signed on behalf of the requisitionists,  
GEORGE EDMONDS.

July 3, 1819.

AT the General Quarter Sessions of the Peace of our Lord the King, held at Nether Knutsford, in and for the County of Chester; on Tuesday the 13th day of July, in the Year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and nineteen.

Present,

The Earl of Stamford and Warrington, His Majesty's  
Lieutenant.

Sir John Thomas Stanley, Bart.

Sir Henry Mainwaring Mainwaring, Bart.

Trafford Trafford, Esq.

Edwin Corbett, Esq.

Thomas William Tatton, Esq.

John Ford, Esq.

John Glegg, Esq.



Wilbraham Egerton, Esq.

Thomas Bayley Hall, Esq.

Egerton Leigh, Esq.

Edward Venables Townsend, Esq.

Peter Marsland, Esq.

Nathaniel Makey Pattison, Esq.

Ralph Wright, Esq.

Edward Tomkinson, Esq.

John Hoskin Harper, Esq.

The Reverend Charles Prescott, Clerk.

The Reverend John Browne, Clerk.

The Reverend John H. Mallory, Clerk.

The Reverend James Thomas Law, Clerk.

A Letter from Lord Sidmouth, His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department, to the Lord Lieutenant of this County, as to the preservation of the public tranquility, having been laid before this Court ;

It is Resolved,

That we, the acting Magistrates for the County of Chester, will, both in our public and private capacities, do our utmost to further the views of His Majesty's Government, in preserving the peace and good order of the Country.

That it appears, that various public meetings have lately been held in this and the neighbouring counties, at which evil disposed and designing persons, taking advantage of the depression of trade and the consequent distress, have wickedly disseminated inflammatory doctrines; and, under the false pretext of Parliamentary Reform, have vilified the constituted authorities, inciting thereby the ignorant and unwary to insurrection and the commission of crimes, which may endanger their personal liberty and lives.

That we therefore conceive it to be our duty, as it is also our determination, to counteract to the utmost of our power all such designs ; and we do most earnestly recom-

mend to all the friends of our King and Constitution, as by Law established, to rally round the standard of legal authority, and by the manifestation of their principles, destroy the baneful effects of blasphemous and seditious doctrines, reclaim the deluded, give confidence to the loyal, and maintain inviolate our rights, our liberty, and our laws.

And we further recommend, that all well disposed individuals be invited to declare their willingness to come forward in support of the civil power ; and, if necessary, to form voluntary Associations for the preservation of the public tranquility.

And we further recommend the Magistrates at their several Petty Sessions, in cases of emergency, to appoint such number of the well disposed Inhabitants in their districts to be special Constables, 'as to them shall seem necessary for the preservation of the peace.

Resolved,

That the Magistrates acting for the hundred of Macclesfield, be requested to obtain all the information in their power as to the proceedings of the disaffected in that district ; and that this Court do adjourn to an early day, for the purpose of receiving their reports, and adopting such further measures as circumstances may require.

That it be recommended to the Magistrates in the hundreds of Bucklow and Macclesfield to act on the present occasion as far as possible in concert with the Magistrates of the county of Lancaster.

That these Resolutions be inserted in all the public papers published within this county.

That these resolutions be signed by the Lord Lieutenant on behalf of the meeting.

STAMFORD and WARRINGTON,  
Lieutenant.

Birmingham, July 18, 1819.

My Lord,

I HAVE great satisfaction in making known to you that the meeting held in this place yesterday evening, *was not attended with any breach of the peace, and that the whole assemblage had quietly dispersed before seven o'clock.* It may not, however, be unacceptable to your Lordship, to be acquainted with some small detail of the proceedings, as reported to me by various persons employed for that purpose. An attempt was first made to collect a crowd by a miserable procession (as it was called) of Major Cartwright, Wooler, and Edmonds, in a street chariot, carrying two flags: they were also accompanied by one Maddocks, whose father was executed at Warwick, some years since, upon a Bank prosecution; and whose brother is now transported, under a similar conviction. Sir Charles Wolseley was not present, having excused himself on account of the death of a near relation. The chair was taken by Edmonds, and the only speakers were Edmonds, Maddocks, Wooler, Major Cartwright, and one Lewis, who had attended Sir C. Wolseley at Stockport. The proceedings were confined to certain resolutions expressive of the want of reform in the representation of the people; a remonstrance, founded on those resolutions, and addressed (I believe) to the Speaker of the House of Commons; an election of Sir Charles Wolseley to be *Legislatorial Attorney* of the people of Birmingham in Parliament for one year, *if so long he executed his trust faithfully*; an exhortation to this gentleman to be at his post, on the opening of the next session of Parliament, and instructions to him how to proceed. All these, I presume, will be printed, when your Lordship shall be furnished with a copy. *The language held out in the speeches was of a very different kind from that which we UNDERSTOOD to have been used at*

*the meetings to the northward*, which appears sufficiently to prove the knowledge of the speakers, that their audience, on this occasion, were not prepared to bear that language, or to support those who might make use of it.(E) The most violent speaker was Lewis ; the tenor of all the speeches was, abuse of the body *calling itself* the House of Commons, and abuse of some individuals amongst his Majesty's Ministers.

The crowd assembled has been variously estimated, from 10,000 to 25,000 persons ; of these, however, a great proportion were women and children. The nature of the ground is such, being two sides of an amphitheatre, rising to a considerable height, that it is almost impossible for a person in the crowd to form any estimate of numbers. Lord Aylesford and myself, who could survey the whole assemblage from the roof of an adjoining house, had formed our own opinion, that the number could not exceed 10,000. This meeting seems to afford good ground of conclusion, that the first open acts of violence to which the populace are to be instigated, will not take place in this immediate neighbourhood. It is, however, (to use the language of this Lewis) "one blow to the existing system;" and I presume the next meeting called here, will be to receive the report of what occurs upon Sir Charles Wolseley offering to take his seat, if he is wild enough, so far, to fall into their plans.

After the meeting, a small party of the principal performers, and their adherents, adjourned to a low public house, to pass the evening ; but I have not heard what occurred there.

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(E) This sentence proves how rash and groundless was the conclusion, in the latter part of Mr. Spooner's former letter. Surely, on comparing them together, Mr. S. must feel the impropriety of his unadvised *speculations*, as to the conduct of the people.



I had the greatest satisfaction in Lord Aylesford's attendance here, both in his assistance as a magistrate, and from his being on the spot, to issue the necessary orders for the assembling of the yeomanry, had any disturbance occurred. His Lordship, as well as myself, thought it prudent to remain in the town during the whole night.

I have the honour to be,

Your Lordship's

Very faithful and obedient servant,

ISAAC SPOONER.

The Viscount Sidmouth,

&c. &c. &c.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship, that I have this evening had an interview with Mr. Norris, the residing Magistrate, and Mr. Moor, the first Constable, of Manchester, who has communicated to me the inclosed resolutions of a meeting held in that town, with a view to strengthen the civil power; *and these gentlemen have at the same time shewed me a letter from your lordship's office, giving them reason to believe, that the offer of an armed association, if sanctioned by my recommendation, would meet with the approbation of his Majesty's Government*; I therefore lose no time in laying their proposal before your lordship, and adding my strongest conviction, that its immediate adoption will be highly conducive to the preservation of the public peace in the district of Manchester, and its neighbourhood, and therefore I request your lordship to lay it before the Prince Regent with my recommendation; and that, if his Royal Highness is pleased to approve thereof, you will give immediate directions to the proper officers, that the arms and accoutrements necessary to give effect to this plan, may be furnished to the Association with as little delay as possible. On the

strength of your lordship's letter, I have ventured to desire I may be furnished with a list of the persons whom it is wished to recommend as officers, and I shall do myself the honour of forwarding it to your lordship, as soon as I receive the same, that, in case the plan is approved, the same may be put into execution, with that promptitude recommended by your lordship, and which I am persuaded the exigency of the case requires.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's obedient humble servant,

DERBY.

Knowsley, Friday night,

July 16, 1819.

The Viscount Sidmouth,

&c. &c. &c.

*Manchester Police Office, July 16, 1819.*

At a meeting of the Committee "to Strengthen the Civil Power,"

JOHN BRADSHAW, Esq. in the Chair,

The following Resolutions were passed unanimously.

THAT, Government having signified their approbation of an Armed Association, an offer be immediately made by this Committee, through the medium of the Lord Lieutenant of this county, of an Armed Association in aid of the civil power, and for the protection of the towns of Manchester and Salford, and their immediate neighbourhood; and that Government be requested, for the present, to furnish arms and accoutrements for one thousand men.

That this Committee do not conceive that any uniform will be necessary for such Armed Association.

That it is on every account desirable, that the least possible sacrifice of time should be required in drilling, as it is considered only necessary, that the most simple parts of military discipline should be acquired by such Association.

That a deputation, consisting of Mr. Norris, the resident Magistrate, and Mr. Moor, the first Constable of Manchester, do immediately wait upon the Lord Lieutenant of the County, to communicate the foregoing resolutions, and to take his opinion thereupon.

JOHN BRADSHAW, Chairman.

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Resolutions passed at the Meeting held on Hunslet Moor, near Leeds, 19th July, 1819:

RESOLVED,

1st. That there is no such thing as servitude in nature : and therefore, all statutes and enactments, that have tendency to injure one part of society for the benefit of the other, is a gross violation of the immutable law of God.

2nd. That as our legislators have, in innumerable instances, manifested a cruel and criminal indifference to our truly distressed situation, and treated our petitions with contempt, we therefore make this solemn appeal to our oppressed fellow countrymen, praying them to join us in forming a National Union, the object of which is to obtain an overwhelming majority of the male population, to present such a petition, as can scarcely fail to have the desired effect, and to adopt such other constitutional measures, as may be deemed most expedient to procure for us the redress of our manifold grievances.

3rd. That we are perfectly satisfied that our excellent constitution, in its original purity, as it was bequeathed to us by our brave ancestors, is fully adequate to all the

purposes of good government ; we are therefore determined not to rest satisfied with any thing short of the Constitution—the whole Constitution—and nothing but the Constitution.

4th. That as we are perfectly satisfied that annual parliaments and universal suffrage constitute an essential part of our constitution, and are our rightful inheritance—we shall consider our grievances unredressed, and our indisputable rights withheld from us, until we are possessed of such annual parliament and universal suffrage.

5. That this meeting cannot but view, with regret, the apathy of our should-be-leaders, that is, our men of property, in not supporting our mutual rights, convinced that alienation of the rich from the poor must, in the end, be the ruin of both ; that whenever oppression or despotism militates, or is the ruin of one, it must, in the end, be the destruction of the other ; we therefore entreat them, ere it be too late, to stand forward and espouse the constitutional rights of the people, by endeavouring to obtain a radical reform in the system of representation, which can alone save the trading and labouring classes from ruin.

6th. That we believe the distresses we now suffer have originated in borough-mongering system, aided by a depreciated paper currency, which has involved the nation in one hundred thousand millions of debt, and which has increased taxation to such an extent, as has nearly destroyed our manufactures and commerce ; and we are perfectly satisfied, that nothing but a currency, convertible into specie, a rigid economy, and an equal representation, can either put an end to our sufferings, or save our country from ruin.

7th. That the Saving Bank scheme, which was instituted under a pretence of benefiting the working classes, when nearly three-fourths of them were out of employ, is an insult to common sense and real understanding, and



ought to be considered as what it really is,—an engine to work the last shilling out of the pockets of a few old servants and retired tradesmen, to enable the Bank and boroughmongers to pay the fractional parts of the dividends, and to create a sort of lesser fund-holders, of those who know no better than to make a deposit of their hard earnings to fill the pockets of those who are draining them of their last shilling.

8th. That, as distress has become so general and extensive, we deem it highly necessary, that deputy meetings should be appointed, and out of these deputy meetings district meetings, to meet at any place that may be thought proper; that these meetings shall extend throughout the three United Kingdoms, and that they do consist of men discreet and wise, and out of these shall be appointed men to form a National Meeting, that the whole may be brought to one focus, in order that they may devise the best plan of obtaining a Radical Reform, upon the principle of Annual Parliaments, Universal Suffrage, and Election by Ballot.

9th. That no redress can be obtained but from ourselves; that we amply possess the means; and if we fail to adopt them with vigour, and resolutely persevere therein, we shall merit every privation we may have to endure, and deserve the detestation of posterity, to whom we shall leave a greater legacy of tyranny and oppression than ever was bequeathed from one generation to another.

10th. That should the usurpers of our rights, in order to retain their power, proceed to acts of violence against the people, and even succeed in incarcerating individuals, we earnestly entreat our fellow-countrymen not to suffer their exertions to relax, but, on the contrary, persevere in the steady path of duty, looking to the end, even the salvation of our country; and our fellow-countrymen will endeavour to lighten the fetters, and en-

liven the dungeons, of those men who are now suffering, or may hereafter suffer, in the sacred cause of liberty.

11th. That we consider it to be the duty of every well-meaning subject, to stand with all his might against oppression and partial law; in doing which, an individual exposes himself to destruction, but if the whole community act as one man, success must be the result.

12th. That every well-wisher to mankind cannot but consider it to be his duty to endeavour, by every means in his power, to work a thorough reformation in the political and moral state of the country; and the surest mean is to lay aside every sordid maxim of avarice, and abandon the restraints of luxury and false ambition, which are at present so fatal to the nation.

13th. That a very small number of men who have guided the councils, and have plundered the people in order to complete their fraud, have hired the offscouring of society to print and publish newspapers, who have nearly succeeded in making thousands, who might have been the leaders and friends of the people, believe the present system was for our good, when they were fattening on our property, and reducing all classes of society, till they have at last brought us to a strait from whence there are no issues but through a radical reform.

14th. That the passing of corn laws, in opposition to the express will of the people—the combination act, in order to prevent work people from unitedly attempting to raise their wages, in proportion to the advancement of provisions—and the imposing a duty on foreign wool, at a time when the woollen manufacture, and those employed therein, are in the most deplorable condition—appear to this meeting proof positive, that until the Members of the Commons House are really appointed by the people at large, little improvement is to be expected in the circumstances of the people, or diminution of their distress.

15th. That as soon as an eligible person, who will accept the appointment, can be found, to represent the unrepresented part of the inhabitants of Leeds, in the House of Commons, another meeting shall be called, for the purpose of electing him to that situation.

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*New Bailey, Court House,*

*Manchester, 20th July, 1819.*

To the Worshipful the Chairman and Magistrates assembled at the General Quarter Sessions of the Peace for the Hundred of Salford.

THE solemn and important duty which we have been called upon to discharge, could not fail to impress most forcibly upon our minds a grateful sense of the blessings which every individual of this nation enjoys, under the administration of just and equal laws, and under the protection of a Constitution so wisely and so excellently framed; and we feel it incumbent upon us, thus openly to express our united concern and abhorrence, when we observe that foul and restless spirit of sedition, which has so long been maturing its desperate designs, and has so frequently disturbed the public peace, assuming at the present moment a tone of defiance, and pursuing a system of organization, which unquestionably indicate an approaching effort to involve this country in all the horrors of a revolution.

We are fully aware of the alarming crisis at which we are arrived, and anxious that the public should be awakened to a sense of the danger to which they are exposed; we nevertheless feel a strong and well grounded confidence in the zeal and loyalty of the great body of the people, and in the unanimity with which all good and honest men, of every party and persuasion, will stand

forward in repelling every outrage and violence which may be attempted, and that they will co-operate with the civil authorities in support of our laws and constitution, in the maintenance of public peace, and for the security of their properties and their lives.

We are well assured that the Magistrates, and the local authorities, of this district, will adopt every measure of precaution, which their wisdom and experience may judge necessary for the public safety ; at the same time we cannot refrain from stating it as our decided opinion, that it is expedient to recommend the immediate establishment of Armed Associations, in these towns, and in the surrounding districts, for the purpose of strengthening and supporting the Civil Power ; *and we are persuaded that any recommendation from the Magistrates on this subject, will be promptly and most eagerly obeyed.*

But whilst we thus feel the urgent necessity of providing for the public security, against every lawless and treasonable attempt of the abettors of revolution, we are not insensible to the distress which prevails among the labouring classes of society, in consequence of the present serious depression of our commerce. We know that the wants and privations which the families of the industrious labourer now endure, owing to the low rate of wages, are extremely severe ; *and we feel it our duty to recommend the adoption of every possible means for their relief and support :* but we know at the same time that their distresses *have NO RELATION AT ALL to the Government or Constitution of this Country ;* they arise from the state of our trade with foreign countries, and are purely of a commercial nature ; *and we know that similar distress, in a far greater degree, is experienced both in America, and throughout the whole Continent of Europe.*

It is evident therefore, to the plain reason and understanding of every honest man, that any attempts to dis-



turb the public tranquility, and to seize this occasion of carrying into effect revolutionary designs against the State, can only serve to increase and embitter our present misfortunes ; to interrupt the regular course of trade ; and to retard the return of better and more prosperous times : and we fervently hope that such of our misguided countrymen AS MAY HAVE *been seduced from their allegiance* will yet seriously pause ; and consider, that if they persevere in the wicked course which they are now pursuing, they will inevitably bring upon themselves the just and severe punishment of the offended Laws of their Country.

THOS. PEEL.

JOHN TOUCHET.

JOHN HARDMAN.

JAMES KAY.

ARTH. CLEGG.

WILL. HUTCHINSON.

WILL. TETLOW.

JAS. H. HERON.

WM. LOMAS.

A. WHITWORTH.

CHRISTR. PARKER.

THOS. WATKINS.

T. WORTHINGTON.

THOS. HELSBY.

THOMAS ENTWISLE.

J. S. BARTON.

JOHN TETLOW.

WILLIAM HATTON.

WILLIAM HILL.

ROBT. HAY.

*Wentworth, 21st July, 1819.*

My Lord,

A GENERAL meeting of the people on Hunslet Moor, near Leeds, having been fixed for Monday the 19th instant, I have deferred writing to your Lordship since my arrival in the West Riding till that event had taken place.

From the reports I have received of what passed on that occasion, I find that nearly the same orators who took a leading part at the preceding meeting at the same place, and also at other meetings in the West Riding, again took the lead at this ; their professed object and means the same—Parliamentary Reform through Universal Suf-

frage, Election by Ballot, and Annual Parliaments, *but not to be sought for by violence*;—to these was added, on this occasion, the election of a representative to Parliament, whenever a proper one could be met with. The resolutions passed were numerous and long; but I have not their particulars as yet, the managers not having yet dressed them up to their own liking for print, which I suppose they will do in the usual way on such occasions, without any very scrupulous attention to what was proposed and passed by the meeting: however, when printed, the sentiments and views of these leaders will be ascertained—for the present I have to report to your Lordship (according to the reports made to me) that the tone of these gentlemen was manifestly humble and much lowered, compared to that they assumed at the preceding meeting at the same place; so much so, that even an inclination to petition Parliament was expressed:—at the close, the meeting was *dissolved*.

I am given to understand, that scarcely more than half the number of the preceding meeting had assembled at this, and that the proportion of women was much larger at this than at the former: *it passed off without the least disturbance or tumult; and they dispersed in the most peaceable and orderly manner, without insult or affront to any one.* I have reason to think, that such a termination of this meeting was foreseen by the Mayor, founded upon an opinion, that the *mass of the population within his jurisdiction is by no means disaffected nor seditiously disposed; that they are suffering most cruel privations through want of employment, the consequence of stagnation of trade;* but I am told, that aware of the cause, *they bear their hard lot with wonderful patience and resignation:* but the very circumstance of want of occupation, leads many to make part of the throng on occasion of such meetings, without being parties in the views of the leaders or participating in their sentiments.

It will be a happy thing if the seditious and dangerous language that undoubtedly has been most directly held by these itinerant orators can be brought home to them: the conviction of any will be a public good; but, bad as the men may be, and indefatigable in propagating their doctrines, *their mischievous spirit does not pervade the mass of the population of the West Riding*; on the contrary, from all I can collect, I report with confidence to your Lordship, *that the peace, tranquility, and good order, of the Realm, will not be disturbed by these people.*

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

&c. &c. &c.

WENTWORTH FITZWILLIAM.

Viscount Sidmouth,

&c. &c. &c.

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*Wentworth, 31st July, 1819.*

My Lord,

CONSIDERING the Assizes at York as the best possible opportunity for collecting the general opinion respecting the temper and disposition of the people of the Riding, I went thither; and it is with great satisfaction I report to your Lordship, that it appeared the universal sentiment, that however much the population of the manufacturing district might suffer under the present stagnation of trade, *there was no disposition to unite imaginary grievances with their real distress.* They had attended meetings which had been called, not in the view of taking part in the political disquisitions and claims of the itinerant orators, but in the hope and expectation that they would be directed to the bettering their own condition; and indeed it is thought, that as far as the assemblage extended

on those occasions, it was in a great degree owing to their real grievance, want of employment: they went, having nothing else to do. I am confident I speak the general sentiment of those present at York, in saying, that *there is no cause for suspecting any disposition of the people of this Riding, to turbulence or commotion*: if there be any discontent in their minds, it has nothing to do with constitutional considerations; but arises out of the improvements in the art of manufacture, which diminishes the calls for their exertions and industry, and has become to them a real afflicting grievance.

I add likewise, as the prevalent and I believe universal opinion of the gentlemen I met at York, that NO STEP THAT COULD IN ANY WAY CONVEY A SUSPICION OR JEALOUSY OF THE PEOPLE'S VIEWS AND WISHES, SHOULD BE ADOPTED; but that on the contrary WE SHOULD PROVE TO THEM, BY OUR OWN DEMEANOUR, OUR OPINION OF THEIR GOOD DISPOSITION, AND OUR CONFIDENCE IN THEIR GOOD CONDUCT.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

&c. &c. &c.

WENTWORTH FITZWILLIAM.

The Viscount Sidmouth,

&c. &c. &c.

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Stockport, July 24, 1819.

One o'Clock, A. M.

Sir,

BIRCH brought in Harrison at eight o'clock, and was followed to his own house, where he lodged him, by a mob. *I took the Justice there to have him committed, AND WE WERE INSULTED.*—The bail were directed to wait upon me. Whilst I was examining them as to their



sufficiency, three men came up to Birch and questioned him as to Harrison, and that instant one of the three fired a pistol at Birch, who was not two yards from the person who fired. *The bullet lodged in his breast AND CANNOT BE FOUND.*

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your very obedient humble Servant,

J. LLOYD.

H. Hobhouse, Esq.

Under Secretary of State,

&c. &c. &c.

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*Manchester, August 5, 1819.*

My Lord,

HEREWITH I transmit your Lordship two Handbills published here, by which you will find that the meeting for Monday is put off. This I believe will be *a great disappointment to the neighbouring Towns*, which have provided numbers of Flags and Caps of Liberty for the ensuing occasion. The drilling parties encrease VERY EXTENSIVELY, and unless some mode be devised of putting this system down, *it promises to become a most formidable engine of Rebellion*. I expect the operation of the Watch and Ward Act will have great effect in this instance.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's faithful and humble Servant,

J. NORRIS.

To Lord Viscount Sidmouth,

&c. &c. &c.

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#### PUBLIC MEETING.

WE, the undersigned INHABITANT HOUSEHOLDERS of MANCHESTER, having given notice of a PUBLIC



MEETING, intended to have been held here "On Monday the 9th of August, 1819, on the area near St. Peter's Church," which notice was published in the Manchester Observer of Saturday last, 31st July, do hereby respectfully inform the Public, that after a mature consideration of all circumstances, we deem it prudent to acquaint the Public, that such *Meeting will NOT at that time take place*, and respectfully recommend to our Fellow Townsmen and Neighbours, to relinquish their intentions of

*Attending that Meeting,*

for the specific purpose expressed in the Advertisement.

Our Guardians of the Public Peace having in massy placards and large letters declared the said Meeting to be ILLEGAL, and commanded the People to "ABSTAIN FROM ATTENDING THE SAID MEETING AT THEIR PERIL," although these Guardian Angels did not deign to inform the Public wherein such illegality consisted : yet, in compliance with their Mandate, and to give them no just ground of opposition or offence, it has been deemed advisable NOT to hold such Meeting ; but to request the Boroughreeve and Constables to convene another ; which Requisition *now lies, but will only lie this day*, for signatures at the Observer Office, and at No. 49, Great Ancots-street.

WM. OGDEN, 26, Wood-street.

JAMES BRADSHAW, 32, Newton-street.

WM. DRINKWATER, 29, Loom-street.

THOMAS BOND, 7, John-street.

JAMES LANG, Spinning-street.

JOSEPH RHODES, 46, Henry-street.

EDWARD ROBERTS, 2, Ancots-street.

TIMOTHY BOOTH, 1, Little Pitt-street.

THOMAS PLANT, 18, Oak-street.

JAMES WEIR, 11, Gun-street.

NATH. MASSEY, 2, School-street.

The following is a Copy of the Requisition now remaining for signatures at the Observer Office, and 49, Great Ancots-street.

TO THE  
BOROUGHREEVE and CONSTABLES of  
MANCHESTER.

WE, whose names are hereunto subscribed, request that you will CONVENE A MEETING at as early a Day as possible, to consider the propriety of adopting the most LEGAL and EFFECTUAL MEANS of obtaining a REFORM in the COMMONS HOUSE of PARLIAMENT,  
*Wednesday, August 4, 1819.*

J. Wroe, Printer, Observer Office, Market-street, Manchester.

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TO THE REQUISITIONISTS,  
Who signed the Notice for the Public Meeting on  
Monday next.

*Fellow Citizens,*

ON my return from Liverpool, with the result of the important mission which you did me the honour to confide into my hands, and in the faithful discharge of my duty towards you, and the rest of my Fellow Citizens, I deem it necessary thus publicly to inform you, that after taking Counsel's Opinion upon the legality of your Public Notice, I am instructed by Mr. Ranecock, to say, "that the intention of choosing Representatives, contrary to the existing law, tends greatly to render the proposed Meeting seditious; under those circumstances it would be deemed justifiable in the Magistrates to prevent such Meeting."

In recommending you to withdraw your Notice, and relinquish your intention of meeting your neighbours on the important subjects intended to have been discussed on

Monday next, I deem it necessary to state to you and to the public, that in the opinion of the most enlightened friends to Liberty, resident in Liverpool, your Requisition is perfectly legal and constitutional ; they are, nevertheless, induced to recommend this pause in your proceedings, merely in consideration of the cruel threats of violence issued in a paper\* from the Bench of Magistrates, since the publication of your notice, and of the evident preparations now making to carry those threats into execution. I am acquainted with your necessities—I know the honesty of your intentions,—and the lawful means you are desirous of pursuing ; but in a question of absolute right, you are not prepared to defend yourselves ; I therefore do not deem it advisable, under the present circumstances, to subject the persons of yourselves or your friends to the illegal and unconstitutional violence which your oppressors and their contemptible tools have prepared for the occasion.

The formidable preparations which your Tyrants have made to meet you, their unarmed and suffering victims, is the highest compliment in their power to bestow upon you : it is more even than you could hope to gain by the Meeting ; you therefore may relinquish the objectionable parts of your requisition without regret, or even the shadow of a defeat.

Col. Williams, a County Magistrate, had the honest boldness on Monday last at the Liverpool Quarter Sessions, to advocate your cause, and the cause of the Lancashire Reformers, before his brother Magistrates : he confounded the whole Bench ; not one man being disposed to reply to the constitutional arguments of this faithful and sincere friend of his Country.

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\* The fact is, the publication issued from the Bench peremptorily commands all persons to attend the Meeting, when a contrary meaning was intended to have been conveyed.

I beg leave to conclude with reminding you, and all the friends of liberty and justice, that our cause grows and gathers strength with the plunderings of our enemies; whilst their rapacity must not only destroy the means of their own existence, but must, ere long, turn them to the destruction of each other.

I am, very faithfully,

Your obedient servant,

J. T. SAXTON.

*Manchester Observer Office, August 4, 1819.*

*Printed by J. Wroe, Observer-Office, Manchester.*

*Bolton le Moors, August 10, 1819.*

Sir,

By Colonel Fletcher's directions, I send herewith copies of the informations taken against George Greenhalgh and others.

And have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN RAVALD.

Henry Hobhouse, Esq.

*Lancashire to wit.* } The information of S. N., S. E., D. N., and  
 } D. R., all of Bury in the said County, taken  
 before me, one of His Majesty's Justices of the  
 peace for the said County, the 7th day of  
 August, 1819.

Who all upon their oath say, that in various parts of the neighbourhood of Bury aforesaid, there are nightly assemblies of great numbers of men, who meet together, to learn and practise Military Training, which these informants verily believe to be intended to qualify them for hostile purposes against the government of the country,



and against the peace of our Lord the King, his Crown and Dignity, and to the disturbance of them, these informants, *who hereby assert their fears for their own personal safety*; and therefore they, these informants, pray that these men so training in large bodies, to the terror of his Majesty's subjects, may be apprehended and committed to find sureties for the peace.

S. N.

S. E.

D. N.

D. R.

Sworn before me,

Ra. Fletcher.

*Lancashire* } The information of James Haslam, of Great  
*to wit.* } Bolton, in the said County, Book-keeper,  
 taken upon oath before us, two of his Majesty's Justices of the peace, in and for the said County, the 9th day of August, 1819.

Who saith, That on Saturday evening last, about half past seven o'clock, informant, with Mr. William Webster, were in the valley between Mr. Whitehead's and Cockey Moor, and informant saw many persons drilling on the Moor in a military manner—there might be about 150 or 200 persons: informant watched them from about a quarter of an hour to half an hour: that amongst the persons drilling was John Hargreaves, one of the persons now in custody. Hargreaves was one who gave the word of command. They were in open column when informant first saw them, and then wheeled into line. Hargreaves was in front, and appeared to give the word of command to one division: that about midnight, or a little afterwards, informant and several others apprehended Hargreaves. Informant challenged him with having been drilling persons on Cockey Moor: Hargreaves at first denied it, but on informant telling him that he (Har-



greaves) had wheeled them into line, Hargreaves acknowledged that he had done so; and he then said, if they would but be merciful to him, he would do so no more.

JAMES HASLAM.

Sworn before Ra. Fletcher,  
James Watkins.

The information of Arthur Taylor, of Great Bolton,  
Warper, taken on the same day.

Who saith, That he went, by direction of the Magistrates, to Cockey Moor, on Saturday evening, to observe the persons that were suspected to be drilling, or training and exercising there: that it was about a quarter past eight in the evening, when informant got to the Moor; there were about one hundred persons drilling. The prisoner, George Greenhalgh, was giving the word of command to about thirty-six men; they were in open column, told off in three or four divisions, when informant got to them. They had been marching in files when informant first saw them. George Greenhalgh ordered them to form the line; they then advanced in line, and they did many other manœuvres, George Greenhalgh giving the word of command. Informant was close to them. There were two other divisions on the moor, exercising under the command of other persons: these two other divisions had each about the same number of men as that under George Greenhalgh: that informant, with several others, apprehended George Greenhalgh that night: that informant, on Greenhalgh being apprehended, asked him if he had been in the army? he said "Yes, a little; he had been in the Bury Volunteers. *Informant asked him what they were drilling for? and he replied, only to go to the meeting at Manchester, on Monday, so that they might march to the band.*

ARTHUR TAYLOR.

Sworn before Ra. Fletcher,  
Jas. Watkins.

The information of Samuel Fletcher, of Little Lever, Collier, taken the same day.

Who saith, That on Saturday last, informant was on Cockey Moor, about seven o'clock in the evening, and informant observed many persons on the Moor; there might be about two hundred; they were drilling in a military way, in different squads, and obeying the words of command given by different drill-masters: that informant saw them drilling for about two hours; that about one or two o'clock in the morning, George Greenhalgh, one of the persons now in custody, was in the room at Starling, with several other persons also taken into custody. There were many persons in the room, and in the course of conversation, George Greenhalgh said, that the meaning of their drilling was, that they might come to that perfection, *so that they might join their friends and neighbours in Bury, and the neighbourhood, and form themselves into a body at Bury, and march in order with music to the Manchester meeting.* He also said, that the meeting would have been on Monday next, (this day) but it was considered to be illegal, and of course it was postponed until the Monday following, and now a requisition to the Boroughreeve and Constables of Manchester, was signed by more than two thousand inhabitants. Informant asked him, "What the meaning of such a meeting could be?" George Greenhalgh said, *the meaning of such a meeting was, that the country should be properly represented.* Informant said, he thought the country was represented; and George Greenhalgh replied, "*No, there was Manchester, Bolton, Bury, and many other towns, that were not represented at all, and it was meant that they should be.*"

SAM. FLETCHER.

Sworn before Ra. Fletcher.

Jas. Watkins.

The Examination of George Greenhalgh, of Walshaw Lane, in Tottington, Weaver, taken the same day ;

Saith, I was drilling men on Cockey Moor, on Saturday evening last ; there was nobody that I know of, besides myself drilling them ; there were two squads in the lane. I did not see Edward Rothwell drilling in particular, but I believe he was there, and might be drilling ; there were about twenty-five in a squad I was drilling ; I have heard they have drilled at Woolfold. Charles Hill, I believe, was not on the Moor on Saturday, but he was with me there on Monday evening last. *It was wished that all the parish of Bury, who had imbibed the spirit of reform, should muster, to go all together to Manchester meeting.* The reason that set me upon drilling, was the rumours of the country, and from reading the Observer Paper. *I exhorted my neighbours on Cockey Moor to a peaceable conduct, and hoped none of them were for revolution and plunder ; if they were, I hoped they would be mistaken.* The first night we met, was on Monday last ; there were upwards of one hundred ; it was accidental how many men there were in a section. On Monday night Charles Hill and John Holt were drill-masters ; I was in the ranks. We have met three times, on Monday, Thursday, and Saturday last.

GEORGE GREENHALGH.


Taken before Ra. Fletcher.

Jas. Watkins.

The Examination of John Hargreaves, of Tottington, Weaver, taken the same day ;

Saith, That I was not on Cockey Moor, on Saturday evening last, nor was ever at any meeting but one, and that was on Monday last, and then I gave the word of command to a small party. I was in the military service

thirty-six years ago; I was at the siege of Gibraltar. On Monday last, when I took the command of a small party, there were other parties on the Moor, but I do not know any one that commanded besides me; they were in divisions, and the divisions were at some distance from each other. *I have heard that the parties that were drilling, were to meet at Bury this day to go to the meeting at Manchester.*

The  Mark of  
JOHN HARGREAVES.

Taken before Ra. Fletcher.

Jas. Watkins.

The Examination of Charles Hill, of Woolfold, in Tootington, Weaver, taken the same day;

Saith, I was on Cockey Moor, on Monday night last, with other persons; they wanted me to drill them. I had been in the second regiment of Lancashire Militia, and was discharged at the first peace with Bonaparte. I did drill the persons on the Moor for a short time on Monday night last; I was coaxed to do it. I cannot tell how many persons there were on the Moor that night; there might be a hundred; they were in different squads; the squads I drilled might consist of twenty or thirty.—George Greenhalgh, John Hargreaves, and John Holt, were drilling other squads that evening. I was not there on Thursday nor Saturday. Adam Ridings, a neighbour of mine, who has been a soldier, went with me to the Moor; I do not know who it was that coaxed me to drill them; there were several who desired me to step out; it was near dark, and I do not know their names. *I did hear that we were to go to Bury this morning, and join others, and proceed to Manchester to the meeting for parliamentary reform.* I heard there was a requisition for choosing a representative, or something in that manner; we were all to have gone this morning to Manchester; we were ordered to go, and many would have gone; but on Friday



*I heard that the meeting was done away with. I did not go to any drilling after I saw the paper from the Magistrates forbidding the meeting at Manchester.*

CHARLES HILL.

Sworn before Ra. Fletcher.

Jas. Watkins.

The Examination of John Holt, of Elton, Weaver, taken the same day ;

Saith, I was with other persons drilling on Cockey Moor, on Monday night last ; there were different squads on the Moor, and I joined them ; I was desired to get into the front, and give them the step. I have been in the Militia. I cannot tell who I saw there ; I did not see Edward Rothwell ; there might be about three hundred in the whole ; from two to three hundred ; lads and all, about three hundred. I gave no word of command, the fogleman gives no word ; Jouly gave the step. There were more than twenty or thirty ; there might be forty in the squad to which I gave the step. I did not give the word, but I gave them the time. I was not there on Thursday, nor on Saturday. I think I saw George Greenhalgh on the Monday evening on the Moor, drilling ; Charles Hill was there ; the man that drilled them I know by sight, but do not recollect his name ; he lives in Tottington, or Woolfold, on that side of the country.

The ✕ Mark of

JOHN HOLT.

Taken before Ra: Fletcher.

Jas. Watkins.

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*Rochdale, 10th August, 1819.*

My Lord,

With the concurrence of my Brother Magistrates, I beg leave to hand to your Lordship, copies of informations,



taken relative to meetings of Reformers which have been held in this neighbourhood for several weeks past. These informations speak as to the proceedings of such assemblies, consequently I need not repeat them here. They certainly appear to us unlawful meetings, calculated to increase the number and power of the disaffected, and therefore ought to be suppressed.

I have the honour to subscribe myself,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most

obedient humble Servant,

JNO. CROSSLEY.

To Viscount Sidmouth.

*Lancashire* } The Examination of A. B. a special Consta-  
*to wit.* } ble, taken upon Oath at Rochdale, in the  
County of Lancaster, the 10th of August,  
1819, before me, John Crossley, Esq. one  
of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace, in  
and for the said County ;

Who says, That about one o'clock in the morning of Sunday last, a large assembly of persons, to the number of two hundred or upwards, met at the Guide Post, which is near to the Parish Church of Rochdale ; that they had a fifer with them, who played upon that instrument ; that the persons so assembled remained about an hour, and then marched away towards Milkstone, which is the direction of Tandle Hill in Thornham ; there was a person who commanded and ordered the persons to fall in four deep, and so to march ; that none of the parties were known to the Examinant.

A. B.

Sworn before me, John Crossley.

*Lancashire* } The Examination of B. C. taken upon Oath  
*to wit.* } at Rochdale, in the County of Lancaster, the  
 9th day of August, 1819, before us, John  
 Beswick and John Crossley, Esquires, two  
 of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace in  
 and for the said County ;

Who says, That yesterday morning I left my residence at High Crompton, between the hours of four and five, and proceeded to a place in Thornham, called Tandle Hill ; that, on my arrival at this place, a large concourse of persons had assembled, to the number of two or three thousand ; that of this number there were upwards of seven hundred who were drilling in companies, by marching both in slow, quick, and double quick time ; and in every other respect went through the usual evolutions of a regiment ; that each company might contain from fifty to sixty men, and were commanded by a person in the character of a captain ; that *when they were ordered to fire, it was immediately followed by a clap of hands throughout the line* ; that, out of the number who were met, I knew a few persons who reside at Crompton, and its neighbourhood ; but, of the men who were acting as drill-serjeants, or officers of companies, I know nothing ; yet, from my knowledge of military discipline, I am satisfied they were persons capable of organizing a regiment ; that, whilst I was on the ground, I heard persons say, that they (meaning the parties in drill) were fit to contend with any regular troops, only that they wanted arms ; and, in the evening of yesterday, a man told me who had been at Tandle Hill, and who said he had been drilled that day, *that a similar meeting would take place next Sunday, but that would be the last* ; that the persons remained on the ground, until about seven o'clock, having been there upwards of three hours, and the whole of this time was devoted to drilling.

B. C.

Sworn before John Beswick and John Crossley.

*Bolton-le-Moors, 10th August, 1819.*

My Lord,

THE increasing spirit of disaffection had, *about ten days ago*, extended itself, in *military training*, to a place between Bury and Bolton, about two miles from the former, and four miles from the latter town.

The number of persons in training at said place was reported to have been about three hundred, on Monday the 2nd instant, and likely to be further increased, unless some check could be interposed. Four principal inhabitants of Bury waited on the Magistrates, to state their utter inability to resist the torrent of disaffection without military aid; and that persons proper to serve as special constables were so intimidated, that without the presence of some military, they doubted their ability to induce them to come forward to be sworn on the day appointed for that purpose, viz. Friday next.—Under such circumstances, it appeared to a brother Magistrate and myself, expedient to apprehend any persons that might meet again at the said place for training purposes; and having taken an information, on oath, from the before-mentioned gentlemen of Bury, and made arrangements with some officers of our Bolton Local Militia, (who were to go previously on a reconnoitring party) we, with a troop of the sixth carabineers, commanded by Captain Ferguson, went to the spot on Saturday, about ten p. m. but found the training just broken up, having, as it is supposed, heard of our intentions.

Our reconnoitring party having, however, observed the training for the space of an hour, and learnt the names of some of the drill instructors, we caused four persons to be apprehended and conveyed to Bolton, who were yesterday examined, and all confessed their having attended at some of the training meetings, and expressed great contrition for having so done. They were all four admitted to bail,

to answer, in fifty pounds each prisoner, and two sureties each in twenty-five pounds, any indictment that may be preferred against them at the next Salford Sessions ; and in the mean time, not to attend any such training assemblies, but to keep the peace, &c. Copies of the informations, examinations, &c. will be forwarded by Mr. Ravald to Mr. Hobhouse\*.

It appears from what one of the prisoners confessed, that he had imbibed his reforming notions from the Manchester Observer ; which, it seems, he was in the habit of reading for the information of his neighbours. From this corrupt source has flowed into this county a considerable portion of that disaffection that prevails.

By the apprehension of these men, I trust, will be stopped any further spread of the training system to the westward, within our magisterial division.

From Bury to the south-eastward, the military preparations continue without any diminution. The detail of their proceedings, proves the alarming progress in the daring boldness of such multitudes of men, arrogating to themselves what belongs to Royalty alone, the power of training men in military tactics, for no other purpose that can be reasonably imagined, than hostility to the State.

At Leigh, (about eight miles south-westward of this town) the advertized meeting will be held to-morrow. The Magistrates of Bolton and Warrington divisions are to meet at Hulton Park this day, to consult on the proper measures.

The female Reformers are to act a conspicuous part, by addressing the assemblage from the hustings, and furnishing a cap of liberty. Hunt and his party are said to be invited.

The effect of such meetings, *so demoralizing and so terrifying to His Majesty's loyal subjects*, (who, if they step

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\* See page 25, &c.



forward, as in duty bound, in the defence of the peace and order of society, are immediately put under a sort of interdiction, by these Reformers, and deprived of their usual share of business, and even exposed to personal dangers) that I am inclined to think, *under whatever pretext they may be called, they ought to be suppressed.* (F)

RA. FLETCHER.

The Right Honourable Lord Viscount Sidmouth.

(F) From these numerous affidavits it clearly appears, that the object of the drilling which has been so much talked of, and excited so much alarm—which has been called by one magistrate, “a most formidable Engine of Rebellion,” and for which it is stated by another, that “no other purpose can reasonably be *imagined*, than *hostility to the state*”—was merely to enable the people to proceed with greater regularity to the approaching meeting at Manchester.

The examination of Arthur Taylor, Samuel Fletcher, George Greenhalgh, John Hargreaves, and of Charles Hall, all from the neighbourhood of Bury, are upon this point coincident and conclusive. The deposition of B. C. at Rochdale, who was told by one of the drillers, “that next Sunday, (the 15th August,) *would be the last meeting*,” leads to the same conclusion, which is still further confirmed by the depositions of F. G., G. H., and H. L., with respect to the drilling at Failsworth. From the evidence of George Greenhalgh, it likewise appears, that in the neighbourhood of Bury, the drilling only lasted from Monday the 2nd to Saturday the 7th August; which statement is confirmed by the introductory paragraph of a letter from Col. Fletcher to Lord Sidmouth, dated the 10th August, as follows. “The encreasing spirit of disaffection had, *about 10 days ago*, extended itself in *military training*, to a place between Bury and Bolton, &c.” whilst the peaceable disposition of these poor men is manifested by the conduct and declaration of him who appears to have been their leader, and who, being asked by Samuel Fletcher, “what the meaning of such a meeting as that at Manchester could be?” answered, “The meaning of such a meeting *was that the country should be properly represented*;” whilst Greenhalgh himself says, in his examination, “I exhorted my neighbours on Cockey Moor to a peaceable conduct, and *hoped none of them were for Revolution and Plunder; if they were, I hoped they would be mistaken.*” The fact, that the people were not aware that they committed any offence against the law in drilling, is evidenced by the publicity with which they practised it. Haslam saw them engaged in it about half-past seven o’clock in the evening, on the 7th of August, when it was of course broad day-light. Samuel Fletcher names 7 o’clock. B. C. fixes the same hour in the morning. K. L., L. M., and M. N., depose to the marching of about 200 persons between 9 and 10 o’clock in the evening, “*INTO THE TOWN OF BURY.*” N. O. saw persons “drilled *ON THE HIGH ROAD*, at Heap Bridge. O. P. saw from two to four hundred returning from drill “along the Turnpike Road,” upon which he was passing towards Rochdale in a stage coach, at “a little past seven o’clock” in the morning. It is worthy of remark too that, although George



*Manchester, August 11, 1819.*

Sir,

THE requisition for the Leigh meeting was signed by twenty-five persons, specifically for the object of discussing and adopting some constitutional and practical remedy in reforming parliament, and averting the present distress. The meeting was fixed for one o'clock in the afternoon.

During the morning a great concourse of the lower order of people were waiting for the arrival of Mr. Hunt, whose presence was anxiously expected, in consequence of which, the meeting was delayed until past two o'clock. Mr. Hunt, and none of his partisans forthcoming, it was deemed necessary to commence the proceedings of the day. Two carts were lashed together in the market place, (a fine open space of ground), when Mr. Battersby, (an itinerant preacher,) Mr. Thomas Cleworth, and a Mr. Bamber, (one of the society of friends) with several others, ascended the platform.

As soon as Mr. Bamber was chosen for their chairman, a parade of the female reformers took place, headed by a committee of twelve young women. The members of the female committee were honoured with places in the carts.

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Greenhalgh, John Hargreaves, Charles Hill, and John Holt, appear to have been the four drill Sergeants, whose apprehension is noticed in Wheeler's Manchester Chronicle of the 14th of August, and who are there stated, as they are also in Col. Fletcher's letter of the 10th August, to have been held to bail, none of them were called upon at the Sessions, nor are their names even inserted in the calendar. Consequently no bills were presented against them. With the single exception of that of E. F., all the depositions agree in the facts, that the persons drilling had no arms: to his statement therefore in opposition to all the rest, and knowing nothing of the veracity of the person by whom it was made, I do not attach much credit. The supplementary affidavit of D. C. seems fairly liable in some respects to the same objections.

Col. Fletcher's hostility to public meetings has long been known; but his zeal appears to have outstripped his judgment, in remarking, "*that under whatever pretext they may be called, they ought to be suppressed;*" since so complete an interdict would demolish his own favorite *Orange Meetings*—I forget, however—those meetings are secret, consequently less constitutional.

They were dressed in white, with black sashes ; and what was more novel, these women planted a standard with an inscription, " No Corn Laws, Annual Parliaments, and Universal Suffrage ;" as well as another standard, surmounted with the cap of liberty, on the platform. Both the flag and the cap were presents from the *Ladies' Union!!*

After the business was opened by Mr. Battersby, and seven resolutions, as well as the ladies' address, had been read, Mr. Turner, at the head of the police, made their appearance, and took Mr. Thomas Cleworth into custody upon a warrant of the Magistrates. About 300 people were now concentrated ; *the officers took their man without opposition*, and this vigilant step threw dismay in the ranks of the reformers, many of whom I saw dispersing in all directions. (G)

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*Manchester, August 12, 1819.*

My Lord,

HEREWITH I have the honour to transmit your Lordship certain depositions, as well respecting the situation in which certain parts of this town have been during the last week, as respecting the practice of drilling, which has so extensively taken place in this and the surrounding neighbourhood. Many more are in existence, and may be added to the number, but I apprehend those which I

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(G) The arrest of Cleworth, during the Leigh meeting, is another instance of those experiments upon the forbearance of the people, of which the late Lord Mayor Atkins set the first example at Smithfield. It is difficult to conceive what object could dictate the choice of such a moment for taking an individual into custody, except a desire to ascertain *precisely* to what extent of provocation the people would passively submit. It cannot, as has been alleged, have been desired simply to maintain the uncompromising dignity of the law, for the influence of that attribute always ceases wherever passion is manifested.

now send will be sufficient to assure your Lordship of this alarming practice. *They affect to say*, that it is for the purpose of appearing at Manchester in better order, &c. on Monday next; but military discipline was not requisite for this purpose, *and a more alarming object is so palpable that it is impossible not to feel a moral conviction that insurrection and rebellion is their ulterior object.* (H)

To Lord Viscount Sidmouth,

J. NORRIS.

&c. &c. &c.

*Lancashire*, } The examination of C. D. taken on oath at Sal-  
to wit. } ford, this 5th day of August, 1819, who saith,

THAT last night about nine o'clock he was returning home from Failsworth: it was dark, but at the distance of two fields from the road along which he was going, he heard the marching of a body of men, and several times heard the words of command, "March" and "Halt." He remained listening about a quarter of an hour, and got upon the hedge side, but it was too dark for him to see the body of men; from the sound he heard he has no doubt there were a considerable number of men, but he cannot state any number as to the particulars. Examinant durst not go to the spot.

Sworn before me,

C. D.

W. Marriott.

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(H) The depositions with respect to training, as I have before shewn, exhibit no motive whatever for it, except that of attending the Manchester Meeting with good order and regularity; yet in spite of their concurrent testimony, though made by different persons, without the possibility of concert, taken by different Magistrates, and relating to different places, Mr. Norris speaks of their avowed purpose as an "affected" one, and concludes by saying "a more alarming object is so palpable, that it is impossible not to feel a moral conviction that Insurrection and Rebellion is their ulterior object." This "moral conviction," in direct opposition to evidence, may suit Lord Sidmouth's notions of justice, but will be appreciated as it deserves, by the enlightened Inhabitants of England.

*Lancashire to wit.*

D. E. says, that last night about a quarter before nine o'clock, he was in Failsworth, and saw between four and five hundred men marching in a field in Failsworth belonging to Robert Bury—he heard the words of command, “March,” “Halt,” “wheel to Right and Left,” and other words given—the men had no arms—they dispersed about ten o'clock and were ordered to meet again this night.

Sworn before me, 5th August, 1819,

J. Norris.

D. E.

*Lancashire to wit.*

The information and examination of E. F. taken upon oath the 31st day of July, 1819, before me, one of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the county of Lancaster, who saith, that on the 19th day of July, 1819, coming from Dry Clough in the township of Oldham, towards the town of Oldham, he met with three men who had all pikes in their hands, the length of which, when the dagger was drawn out, was about two yards long; which said three men were going to join a party of about forty in a field at a little distance, who had likewise some pikes with them, but cannot say how many, and assembled at the sound of a bugle. On the same day, he saw at least one hundred persons near Hey Side assembled together with some pikes amongst them.

Sworn before me,

E. F.

J. Holme.

*Lancashire to wit.*

F. G. maketh oath and saith, That on Thursday night, the 5th of August, he went to a field in the township of Failsworth, belonging to Robert Bury, where he saw about ninety persons, divided in four divisions and a small division which they called the aukward squad; that there was a man to give the word of command; that deponent heard them commanded to march to the right and left, to



wheel, fire, &c. that the men *had no fire arms*, but when the word “fire” was given they clapped their hands altogether; that after they had done exercising, they formed a circle round their commander, who told them, *that the intended meeting was put off, on account of their paper being illegal*, BUT THAT WOULD GIVE THEM MORE TIME TO DRILL: he then said they must have a colour, and that they must subscribe; that the man then took off his hat, and gathered round from some a penny, and from others a halfpenny each; that there were a quantity of women in the field, and the leader of the men called to them to come into the ring, and said they must subscribe also, and that he wanted twelve young ladies to carry their colours, for he was certain if there was a regiment of soldiers drawn up to oppose them, they could not find in their hearts to hurt them: that their leader proposed, *that as Bury, the owner of the field, had given them leave to drill in it three weeks, he should have the honour of their marching out of it*; that the persons assembled did not offer to molest deponent, but damned him for being backward in falling in.

G. H. and H. I. having respectively read over the affidavit of F. G. severally make oath that the same is true.

Sworn at Manchester aforesaid, the	}	(Signed)
7th day of August, 1819, before		
me, one of his Majesty's Justices		F. G.
of the Peace for the County of		G. H.
Lancaster,		H. I.
J. Norris.		

*Lancashire to wit.*

I. K. says, That on Sunday morning last, about five o'clock, in company with \* \* \* he went to Thornham or Tandle Hills, near Middleton, and there saw two or three



thousand men, and a number of them exercising in military order;—*they had no arms*; but he heard distinctly the words of command, “Quick march,” and “Double quick march.” Deponent particularly noticed one company of about one hundred, march in wings under their leader, and advance also in wings; that the right wing advanced first, and the words of command, “Fire, front rank kneeling,” and when the word of command “Fire” was given, they clapped their hands; the leader then advanced the left wing in the same order as the right, and ordered them to fire; this was repeated several times. Deponent and Mr. \* \* \* being informed they were to assemble at Slat-tocks in Thornham, near Middleton aforesaid, they repaired thither, and Deponent and Mr. \* \* \* placed themselves by the road side, in order to ascertain their numbers, when they passed Deponent and Mr. \* \* \* marching in military order four deep, when they counted seven hundred men.

Sworn before me at Salford, this

I. K.

10th day of August, 1819.

J. Norris.

K. L. L. M. and M. N. severally make oath and say, That having been frequently informed that a great many of the disaffected inhabitants of Bury, and the neighbourhood, made it a practice to meet or assemble in large bodies to learn military exercise, and that such persons met four or five evenings in a week for that purpose; these Deponents went in company together on Monday the second of August instant, towards the place where they understood such persons generally met; that they had not proceeded more than two or three hundred yards out of the town of Bury, on the Rochdale turnpike road, before they met about two hundred persons, so near as these Deponents could calculate, *between the hours of nine*

*and ten o'clock in the evening, marching in regular military order four deep INTO THE TOWN OF BURY.*

K. L.

(Signed)

L. M.

M. N.

Sworn at Bury aforesaid, the 9th day  
of August, 1819, before me,

Sam. Woodcock,  
a Master Extraordinary in Chancery.

*Lancashire to wit.*

D. E. maketh oath and saith, that in addition to his deposition made on the 5th instant, that on the night in question, viz. the 4th of August, this deponent, in endeavouring to approach the field where the men were training, and when he was within a field from them, and looking over the hedge, a man came up to deponent and said, "Halt;" that deponent was walking away, and the man again said, "Halt;" when deponent said, "if I halt, it will be with a different commander than you," and continued to walk away; that the man followed deponent towards a wood in the neighbourhood; when near it, the man said, "If I catch you, or any other man in the wood, or near it, watching me and others, will be as bad as taking your life from you."

This deponent also says, that on the same night he heard a person in the field where the men were assembled, call,—"Failsworth, Woodhouses, Newton, and Droylsden, (being townships in the neighbourhood) if any of you can afford to give a halfpenny or a penny a piece, you must come forward to-morrow night at half past seven o'clock," and said, "*We will have colours same as the rest,*" meaning, as this deponent believes, that they would have colours because other parties at drill in different parts had already obtained them; that deponent then heard a discussion about them as to whether they

should be blue or otherwise, when one of the persons observed, "*Damn them, we will not be TRUE BLUE any longer, we have been TRUE BLUE long enough.*"

This deponent further saith, that about half-past nine o'clock on Thursday the 5th instant, he went to a field in the neighbourhood of Failsworth, belonging to Robert Bury, and observed from the hedge a party of men at drill, and heard the word of command given several times; and that in an adjoining field, deponent heard the word of command given to another party also at drill.

Sworn at Manchester, in the county of	}	D. E.
Lancaster, the 7th day of August,		
1819, before me one of His Majesty's		
Justices for the same county,		
J. Norris.		

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*Dunham Massey, August 12, 1819.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to enclose your Lordship a Copy of a Resolution made at the adjourned General Quarter Sessions for the County of Chester, held at Nether Knutsford, on Monday the 9th of August, 1819.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble Servant,

STAMFORD & WARRINGTON,

LIEUTENANT.

The Viscount Sidmouth,

&c. &c. &c.

At an Adjournment of the General Quarter Sessions for the County of Chester, held at Nether Knutsford, on Monday the 9th of August, 1819;

Present, Sir John Thomas Stanley, Bart. Chairman.  
The Earl of Stamford and Warrington, His Majesty's  
Lieutenant,

Peter Brooke, Esq.  
Edwin Corbett, Esq.  
Davies Davenport, Esq.  
Wilbraham Egerton, Esq.  
John Ford, Esq.  
John Clegg, Esq.  
Egerton Leigh, Esq.  
Thomas Parker, Esq.  
Edward Stracey, Esq.  
Edward Venables Townshend, Esq.  
Trafford Trafford, Esq.  
Thomas William Tatton, Esq.  
Randle Wilbraham, Esq.  
John Brown, Clerk.  
James Thomas Law, Clerk.  
John Holdsworth Mallory, Clerk.

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this Court, that meetings are held in this and the neighbouring counties for the purpose of training to arms and seditious purposes ; and also, that there are schools, consisting of some thousands of young persons, in which principles of a most dangerous tendency to the community at large are industriously disseminated—which facts can be verified on oath.—And it is the decided opinion of this Court, that these meetings and schools ought to be suppressed ; and if the existing laws are not sufficient for that purpose, that other laws should be immediately framed for their prevention. (1.)

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(1) When I look to the list of names present on this occasion, it is impossible for me to express the surprise I feel at the extraordinary manner in which these gentlemen have committed themselves. It is so new a circumstance to find the *suppression of schools* recommended, that we have a right to expect to see the strongest arguments backed by the most undeniable evidence to justify even the mentioning of so startling a proposition. If at any of these schools “principles of a most dangerous



Ordered, that a Copy of the foregoing Resolution be sent to His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department, through the Lord Lieutenant of this County.

HENRY POTTS,

Clerk of the Peace.

Stockport, 14th August, 1819.

Sir,

*THE lower orders are in a dreadful state—not by distress, for there is work for most that may be willing, except the weavers, who are badly off, and yet perhaps not the worst of the reforming crew; I mean they are quite bold and insulting, and reckon on a speedy and radical change to give them complete power over us.*

*A man has come to me from the neighbourhood of Oldham, and states, that the person he worked for had judged prudent to discontinue till things are settled.*

*The tenants of a gentleman near this town refuse to pay their rents till they know the issue of the Monday's meeting. (κ)*

Your very humble Servant,

H. Hobhouse, Esq.

J. LLOYD.

tendency to the community are industriously disseminated—which facts can be verified upon oath," *why are they not so verified?* Depositions by persons of character and reputation to this fact, would have been much more important than any which ministers have published. But, notwithstanding this positive statement of the Cheshire magistrates, *no such schools exist or ever have existed.* The ground upon which I venture this direct contradiction will be stated hereafter.

(κ) There is a disgusting, flippant, and passionate vulgarity in the style of Mr. Lloyd, who is clerk to the magistrates at Stockport, as manifested in this and his preceding letter, which marks him as a person by no means qualified to convey accurate and unimpeachable information with respect to the subjects on which he writes. His indecent phraseology of the "*lower orders*," and the "*reforming crew*," his numerous grammatical inaccuracies, and the fact of his being one of the prime supports of a neighbouring Orange-club, give a sufficient indication of the cast and capacity of his mind. I must, therefore, be excused for withholding my credit from the stories of the "*man from Oldham*," and "*the tenants of a gentleman near this town*," &c. If the poor are to be calumniated as they have been on such authority, and, on the credit of those calumnies, cut down,—God help them I say!

*Manchester, August 14th, 1819.*

My Lord,

INCLOSED I send your Lordship two depositions which have been taken before the Magistrates this morning, and by which your Lordship will find, that the fact of considerable drilling is carrying on in the neighbouring country; we shall have many more depositions to the same effect to-morrow, I fully expect.

To Lord Viscount Sidmouth,

J. NORRIS.

&c. &c. &c.

*Lancashire, to wit.*

The information and examination of N. O. taken on oath this 14th day of August, 1819, before the under-signed, two of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace in the said County;

Who saith, That he has been at Bury in the said County, since Monday last; that he has seen persons drilling in marching and facing, *but not with arms*, every night since Monday last, 'till last night: that one of the party whom this examinant had seen drilling, told this examinant that there were about five hundred persons on the books who drilled, and more had joined, but whose names were not yet put down. The said persons drilled *on the high road* at Heap Bridge. He heard some persons who had been drilling, say, they were ready for a fight on Monday next if the soldiers were to stop them; that the soldiers who were there, meaning at Bury, would not be a breakfast for them; that a drill master of the name of Johnson was fetched from near Oldham; that somewhere about three o'clock yesterday, this examinant was in the King's Head public house, and two soldiers of the 31st regiment were there; that many men were in the house, some of whom asked the soldiers to drink, and particularly one man, whom this examinant should know again,

asked the soldiers to drink, who had got up to leave the house ; but the soldiers refused, saying, they should be late at parade ; that the said man then shut the door after the soldiers who had gone out, and said, *damn them, I'd as soon give them a drop of their blood to drink as that, meaning a gill of ale which he held in his hand.* This ex-aminant heard some of the persons who had drilled talking of the four men who were taken at Cockey Moor, and say, that none of their men should be taken by Nadin's men, for they would keep a picket out every night.

That the common toasts with the lower class in the public houses, are, *the Cap of Liberty, and may the Wings of Liberty never lose a Feather.*

Taken before us,     { R. Fletcher.                     N. O.  
                                      { Traffd. Trafford.

*Lancashire to wit.*

Be it remembered, That on the Fourteenth Day of August, in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Nineteen, came before me, James Norris, Esquire, one of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the County of Lancashire, O. P. of Manchester, in the said County of Lancaster, Gentleman, and made Oath, that on Sunday morning the Eighth Day of August instant, he went as an inside passenger by the Coach to Rochdale, in the said County ; that when the said coach arrived at a place called the Slattocks, and which is about two miles beyond Middleton, and about three from Rochdale, it stopt, and he the said O. P. saw upon a bank, close to the road, about thirty men and several women ; that having heard much conversation about the people in that neighbourhood having drilled in large bodies, and more particularly on the Sunday morning, it struck this deponent, that the said men might have been so employed that morning, the more particularly as it was then only a little past seven o'clock ; and that he commu-

nicated his suspicions to the gentleman who sat opposite to this deponent, and whom this deponent afterwards understood to be a Mr.                      and who stated to this deponent that it was very probable they had been so employed ; that very shortly this deponent heard the word march, and immediately afterwards several companies of *unarmed men*, and amounting, in the whole, from two to four hundred, marched *along the turnpike road*, on which the coach then was, towards Middleton, and this deponent's impression then was, and now is, that the men so marching had come some way on the said turnpike road, and had been drilling ; and that the men standing on the bank were collected from curiosity, and an expectation, or knowledge, that the said men would march that way ; that this deponent thinks the said men who so marched were divided into six companies or divisions ; that each company or division marched four a-breast, except at the heads of companies, where there was a fifth person with a small stick or cane in his hand, who appeared to be the leader or captain, and gave orders ; that the men marched with great exactness and precision, and appeared to this deponent, who was some years a member of a volunteer corps, to have been regularly drilled, and acquired a good state of discipline ; that the men in one company having got out of step in a trifling degree, one of the leaders of it fell out of the rank, and cried out, “ left, right,” and restored the company immediately into a good state of marching ; that whilst the men were so marching past the coach, one of the leaders looking into the coach, from which they were not distant more than two yards, and apparently addressing the passengers in the coach, used this expression, “ *We will damn'd soon make these borough-mongering vagrants tremble ;*” that this expression was used when about half the men had marched past the coach, and when this deponent had recovered from the surprize into which the march of the men past the coach



had thrown this deponent, and which surprize at the outset had prevented this deponent from counting the numbers of the men who so marched ; that the last company came past the coach in double quick time, and were ordered by their leader to mark time, in consequence of the quickness of their march getting them too near the company before them ; that shortly before the said last company so came past the coach in double quick time, this deponent heard a bugle not far off, and which he has no doubt belonged to the party, though this deponent did not see it ; that in the course of the same forenoon this deponent returned from Rochdale by the mail, which stopped at the said place called the Slattocks, and this deponent inquired from the persons about, who the people were he had seen in the morning ; that the said people from whom he inquired were unwilling to say any thing ; but at length reluctantly said, they supposed they were a part of the men who had been drilling near the Tandle Hills, and that they were the Oldham division.

Sworn before me, J. Norris.

O. P.

Jonathan Andrew, of Manchester, maketh oath, and saith, that on Thursday evening the 12th instant, betwixt the hours of eight and nine o'clock, he saw exercising on the new road to Rochdale, from 20 to 25 men armed with staves, from 4 to 5 feet long, and apparently about 3 to 3½ inches round, similar to a brush stail, but chiefly of green wood. He heard the words of command given (by a person separated from the rest,) march, halt, &c.

JONATHAN ANDREW.

Sworn before me this 13th day of

August, 1819, W. R. Hay.

*Knowsley, August 15, 1819.*

My Lord,

I conceive it to be my duty to inform your Lordship, that in consequence of a representation made to me by the Select Committee of Magistrates assembled at Manchester, (and perfectly agreeing with them in the expediency of the measure,) I issued a precept for a special meeting of Magistrates, to consider of the propriety of a general or partial execution of the Watch and Ward Act, and I have now the honour to inclose to your Lordship a letter from the Clerk of the Peace, by which you will perceive how far the same has been carried into execution. I trust this, and the other measures adopted by the magistracy, will put a stop to the danger to be apprehended from the evil designs of such as wish to disturb the peace of the country; but I am sorry to add, there is still too much cause to believe, that in some parts of this county, there are assemblies of men, who meet in considerable numbers, with the object of training and exercising themselves for *illegal and seditious purposes*. Of all this, however, your Lordship is I am sure, already informed with more accuracy, and in greater detail, than I am able to give you. It is with great regret that I am obliged to add, that the raising the armed association (notwithstanding the zealous endeavours of the Boroughreeve and Committee at Manchester, who made the offer to Government) proceeds so slow, that I have not yet been able to obtain a list of gentlemen to be submitted to the Prince Regent as officers for the same. I am, however, informed by the Boroughreeve, that the list of field officers and captains for *one* battalion has been completed, but they consider it premature to send it to me, as the number of men already enrolled is far below the number which should constitute *one* battalion. I think it right to apprise your Lordship of this circumstance, but without the most distant idea of imputing blame, or want of zeal, to any person concerned in the

transaction. The arms, &c. for nearly the whole corps have been forwarded to my order from Chester Castle some time since, and, with the concurrence of Major General Byng, I have directed them to be lodged at the Cavalry Barracks, under the military custody of the officer commanding there, until the corps becomes sufficiently effective to have them transferred to their hands. (L)

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's obedient humble servant,  
DERBY.

The Viscount Sidmouth,  
&c. &c. &c.

*Preston, 13th August, 1819.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship, that I attended yesterday at Manchester, to put in execution the Watch and Ward Act, when the whole of Salford Hundred, and the Warrington Division of West Derby Hundred, were placed under the provisions of the Act.

I have the honour to be,

Your Lordship's most obedient servant,

E. GORST.

(L) That part of this letter of Lord Derby which refers to the proposed "armed association," recommended by the self-constituted Committee, "to strengthen the civil power," proves, that the opinion of the great body of the respectable Inhabitants of the Town, did not go along with the Magistrates and their friends in their professed apprehensions of danger; for, at the expiration of a month, after resolutions in favour of the formation of an "armed association" had been adopted, his Lordship states, that "the number of men already enrolled, is far below the number which should constitute one battalion." Indeed, after labouring three months without success, the plan was entirely given up, and the arms and accoutrements (the Newspapers have stated) were re-lodged in Chester Castle. It is absolutely incredible that the Inhabitants would have hesitated to associate for the protection of dible property, if they had considered it exposed to danger.

Manchester, August 15, 1819.

11 o'clock, P. M.

My Lord,

THE Magistrates, the military, and civil authorities of Manchester have been occupied nearly the whole of this day in concerting the necessary arrangements *for the preservation of the peace to-morrow, and for the safety of the town, in case riot should ensue.* We have been much occupied in taking depositions from various parts of the country; *and although the Magistrates, as at present advised, do not think of preventing the meeting,* yet all the accounts tend to shew, that the worst possible spirit pervades the country; and that considerable numbers have been drilling to-day, at distances of four, six, and ten miles from Manchester; and that considerable numbers are expected to attend the meeting. *I hope the peace may be preserved; but under all circumstances, it is scarcely possible to expect it; and in short, in this respect, we are in a state of painful uncertainty.* (M)

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's faithful and humble servant,

J. NORRIS.

To Lord Viscount Sidmouth,

&c. &c. &c.

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(M) I particularly call the attention of the public to this short letter from Mr. Norris, dated 11 o'clock, on the night before the meeting. At that time, Mr. Norris states, the magistrates did not think of preventing the meeting; from which I conclude they considered it to be legal. Before their subsequent interference can be justified, it must therefore be shewn, either that some circumstances, *not then anticipated*, had occurred, to change the character of the meeting, or it will follow, that the magistrates, with a full knowledge that it would be illegal, determined not to prevent it; a supposition which their notice with respect to the proposed meeting on the 9th, renders inadmissible. The offensive characteristics which have been attributed to the meeting of the 16th, are the Caps of Liberty, the banners, the military array, the music, and the numbers. The conduct of the magistrates on the 16th could not be influenced by the Caps of Liberty, or the banners, for Mr. Norris



THE Boroughreeve and Constables of Manchester and Salford most earnestly recommend the peaceful and well disposed of those towns, as much as possible, to remain in their own houses during the **WHOLE OF THIS DAY**, Monday, August 16th instant ; and to keep their children and servants within doors.

Edward Clayton,	Boroughreeve of Manchester.
John Moore, jun.	} Constables.
Jonathan Andrew,	
John Greenwood,	Boroughreeve of Salford.
James Cooke,	} Constables.
Josiah Collier,	

Manchester : Printed by Wheeler and Son.

knew of, and alluded to those, in his letter of the 5th of August ; in some of the affidavits also, the preparation of colours for the meeting is noticed, as being in progress ; nor by the military array, “ for numerous affidavits had already declared, that, to march to the Manchester meeting was the object of the training.” It could not be the music that gave offence, for that too was anticipated ; nor could it be the numbers, as there unquestionably is no law that fixes any limit to the numbers which shall compose a public meeting. If the people meet peaceably, and for an allowable purpose, the law makes no objection on the score of numbers. Mr. Shepherd, indeed, says in the House of Commons, on the authority of Lord Holt, that numbers, *in terrorem populi*, constitute a riot ; but it must be *the great body of the people* who are terrified, not a few members of Pitt Clubs and Orange Societies ;—otherwise our annual races, where there is always a greater concourse of people than were assembled on the 16th of August, are liable to be dispersed on the same pretence of riot, whenever a few individuals may chance to swear they are afraid. Having therefore shewn, that none of what had been represented as the objectionable characteristics of the meeting of the 16th, could be the means of altering that determination of not preventing the meeting, in which, up to the preceding midnight, the magistrates were agreed, since those characteristics were all well known of and anticipated before, it is for the magistrates, or their apologists, to explain the ground of their subsequent proceedings. I am not to be answered by any quibble, as to the difference between “ preventing” the meeting, and “ dispersing” it. If that be attempted, I shall ask, Whether the same trick was practised upon Lord Sidmouth ? Indeed, if the previous knowledge of the fact, that the meeting would assemble, with music, and flags, and Caps of Liberty, and numbers marching from all parts of the surrounding neighbourhood, afforded no ground for preventing it, it necessarily follows, that the actual exhibition at the meeting, of these insignia, accompanied by the circumstances enumerated, afforded no reason for dispersing it

Manchester, 16th August, 1819.

Quarter past Nine.

My Lord,

MR. NORRIS being very much fatigued by the harassing duty of this day, it becomes mine now to inform your Lordship of the proceedings which have been had in consequence of the proposal put forward for a meeting. The Special Committee have been in constant attendance for the last three days, and contented themselves *till they saw what the complexion of the meeting might be*, or what circumstances might arise, with coming to this determination only, which they adopted in concurrence with some of the most intelligent gentlemen of the town, *not to stop the numerous columns which were from various roads expected to pour in, but to allow them to reach the place of their destination.* (N)

*The assistance of the military was of course required, and arrangements in consequence made with them, of such description as might be applicable to various circumstances.*

About eleven o'clock the Magistrates, who were very numerous, repaired to a house, whence they might see the whole of the proceedings of the meeting. *A body of special constables took their ground, about two hundred in number, close to the hustings; from them there was a line of communication to the house where we were.* Mr. Trafford Trafford was so good as to take the situation of attending Colonel L'Estrange, the commanding officer.

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(N) This paragraph likewise seems to negative the presumption of any pre-existing intention to disperse the meeting. It is a fact, however, that early in the forenoon of the 16th of August, persons supposed to be acquainted with the intentions of the magistrates, distinctly asserted, that Mr. Hunt would be arrested on the hustings, and the meeting dispersed. I myself was more than once told so, but could not conceive it possible that there was any foundation whatever for the report, provided (of which I entertained no doubt) that the meeting were peaceable.

From eleven till one o'clock, the various columns arrived, attended by flags, each by two or three flags; and there were four, if not more, caps of liberty. *The ensigns were of the same description as those displayed on similar occasions, with this addition, that one had a bloody pike represented on it; another, "Equal representation or death."* *There was no appearance of arms or pikes, but great plenty of sticks and staves, and every column marched in regular files of three or four deep, attended with conductors, music, &c.* (o) The most powerful ac-

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(o) Mr. Hay says, "The ensigns were of the same description as those displayed on similar occasions, with this addition, that one had a bloody pike represented on it; another, 'Equal representation or death.'" This admission confines any legal offence, which the banners can be presumed to have created, to the two which Mr. Hay has particularised. With respect to the pike, either Mr. Hay was so far blinded by his fears, or his passion, as to mistake a sword in the hand of an emblematical figure of Justice for a "bloody pike;" or there is no foundation whatever for his assertion. With respect to the latter, certainly such a flag was carried; but before I can admit that there is any legal offence in it, I must be informed what "Equal representation" means; and be convinced, that it is not a *lawful object of pursuit*. The exhibition of such flags is, however, very foolish and in bad taste, because to some persons it gives offence; yet it affords no justification for delivering over an unarmed crowd to military execution. Mr. Hay's distinct statement that, "there was no appearance of arms or pikes," forms a contrast with Lord Sidmouth's assertions in the House of Peers, not much to the advantage of his lordship's veracity; unless indeed, as ministers had, after this letter was written, the assistance of the personal narratives of Mr. Hay and Mr. Hardman, the noble Secretary should have happened to make the statement on their *verbal* authority. In that case, the merit of the *embellishment* belongs to them. Mr. Hay subsequently says, "but long before this, the magistrates had felt a decided conviction that the whole bore *the appearance of insurrection*;" that the array was such as to *terrify all the King's subjects*, and was such as *no legitimate purpose could justify*." Mr. Hay does not explain what this "appearance of insurrection" was, and I know not how to conceive the idea of an "appearance of insurrection" in the absence of the definite and absolute crime of insurrection itself. Besides, the law applies to facts, and not to "appearances;" and if no facts appertaining to the meeting can be pointed out, which amount to an absolute and palpable violation of law, it is in vain to seek to justify the conduct of the Magistrates by referring us to their conviction of "appearances." But "the array was such as to terrify all the King's subjects." Mr. Hay, when he wrote that sentence, knew full well it was untrue. Where is his evidence of it? What! because some *twenty or thirty* persons, as Mr. B. Wilbraham states, or *sixty or seventy* as I have elsewhere heard, principally, I believe, members of the self-constituted "Com-

cession was in the last instance, when Hunt and his party came in. *But, long before this, the Magistrates had felt a decided conviction that the whole BORE THE APPEARANCE OF INSURRECTION ; that the array was such as to TERRIFY ALL THE KING'S SUBJECTS, and was such as no legitimate purpose could justify.* In addition to their own sense of the meeting, they had *very numerous depositions from the inhabitants, as to their fears for the public safety ;* and at length a man deposed as to the parties who were approaching, attended by the heaviest column. On a barouche-box was a woman in white, who *I believe was a Mrs. Gant, from Stockport, and who, it is believed, had a cap of liberty.* (P) In the barouche were Hunt, Johnson, Knight, and Moorhouse of Stockport : *as soon as these four parties were ascertained, a warrant issued to apprehend them. The troops were mustered, and Nadin, preceding the Manchester Yeomanry Cavalry, executed it.* (Q) While

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mittee for strengthening the civil power," or personal friends of the Magistrates, made oath that they were frightened, and that they considered the peace in danger, is that a justification of the conduct pursued? If no offence had previously been committed, these affidavits made none; if there were any, they were supererogatory and useless. But let us look to numbers. Were the 50,000 of his Majesty's subjects who composed the compact body of the meeting—were *they* alarmed? No.—Were the bulk of the inhabitants of those parts of the town through which the processions passed, terrified? Certainly not; for hundreds—probably thousands of them attended the meeting as spectators. Alarm, either for their own safety, or that of their property, would undoubtedly have kept them at home. It is therefore false to say, that "the array was such as to terrify *all*;" or, relatively speaking, even any considerable portion of "his Majesty's subjects."

(P) There are only two mistakes in this short sentence. In the first place Mrs Gaunt is not from Stockport; and in the next she was not on the barouche box.—So much for official accuracy!

(Q) "As soon as these four parties (Hunt, Johnson, Knight, and Moorhouse,) were ascertained, a warrant issued to apprehend them. The Troops mustered, and Nadin, preceding the Manchester Yeomanry, executed it." This is an admirable specimen of sober narrative composition. Who would suppose it referred to any thing but a common and unimportant incident? Who can discover in it a trace of the real characteristics of the event it professes to describe; the violent and rapid incursion of an armed force into the midst of a peaceable multitude, the bruises, the trappings, the fractures, and the sabings, that ensued. But it has also the additional



the Cavalry was forming, *a most marked defiance of them was acted by the reforming part of the mob*; (R) however, they so far executed their purpose, as to apprehend Hunt and Johnson on the hustings: Knight and Moorhouse in the moment escaped. They also took on the hustings, Saxton, and *Sykes, who is the writer to the Manchester Observer, and which Saxton had before been addressing the mob.* (S) The parties thus apprehended, were brought to the house where the magistrates were. *In the mean time the Riot Act was read, and the mob was completely dispersed,* but not without very serious and lamentable effects. (T) Hunt, &c. were brought down to the New

ingredient of falsehood in its composition. Mr. Nadin did *not* "precede the Manchester Yeomanry." On the contrary, he himself swore at the Oldham Inquest, that he *followed* them—that he could not keep pace with them; but arrived at the Hustings soon after they got there.

(R) What the reverend penman here calls "a most marked defiance acted by the reforming part of the mob," that journalist of undoubted and unbounded loyalty Mr. John Wheeler, in the Manchester Chronicle of Aug. 21st, more candidly designates as "cheers." I heard them, and certainly am not aware that they differed from those which Mr. Hunt has been in the habit of frequently instructing his followers to give, when no idea of "defiance" could enter into his mind. Mr. Hay probably however would not wish to be considered as being disposed to view Mr. Hunt's conduct, through the most favourable medium, of which it is even fairly susceptible.

(S) In this sentence there are *only* three deviations from truth. In the first place, there was no such person as Sykes arrested; in the next, the Manchester Observer has not, and never had, any writer of the name; and in the third, Saxton had *not* been addressing the people.

(T) This sentence is most important. In the composition of his despatches announcing the victory obtained over the starving populace, the reverend stipendiary chairman of the Salford Quarter Sessions, seems to have thought it almost needless to say a word with respect to the reading of the riot act. It is just noticed, but evidently only *en passant*; and being placed in immediate collocation with the dispersion of the meeting, we must necessarily suppose the two circumstances to have been simultaneous: where then is Lord Castlereagh's authority for asserting that the riot act was read not once, but three times? Who told him that a magistrate, in attempting to read it, was trampled under foot? Or, that they sent a third magistrate to read it at the hustings, in order that no man might be ignorant of the fact of its having been read? Let him, if he *can*, produce one man, above the character of a *lag*, or a police officer, who will pledge his veracity for the fact: his lordship *cannot* do it, and I now assert my fullest conviction, that not one respectable person can be

Bailey ; two magistrates and myself, having promised them protection, preceded them ; we were attended by special constables and some cavalry. The parties were lodged in the New Bailey ; and since that have been added to them, Knight and Moorhouse. On inquiry, it appeared that many had suffered from various instances ; one of the Manchester Yeomanry, Mr. Hulme, was, after the parties were taken, struck by a brick-bat ; he lost his power over his horse, and is supposed to have fractured his skull by a fall from his horse. I am afraid that he is since dead ; if not, there are no hopes of his recovery. A special constable of the name of Ashworth has been killed—*cause unknown* ; and *four women appear to have lost their lives by being pressed by the crowd* ; these, I believe, are the fatal effects of the meeting. A variety of instances of sabre wounds occurred, but I hope none mortal ; several pistols were fired by the mob, but as to their effect, save in one instance deposed to before Colonel Fletcher, we have no account. We cannot but deeply regret all this serious attendant on this transaction ; but we have the satisfaction of witnessing the very grateful and cheering countenances of the whole town ; in fact, they consider themselves as saved by our exertions. (v) All the shops were shut, and,

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found, who will vouch of his own knowledge, that the Riot Act was read once in any manner, comprehending even a tolerable approach to the form prescribed by the statute.

(v) "A special constable of the name of Ashworth has been killed—*cause unknown*." The cause was known, to every body but Mr. Hay, to have been the attack of the yeomanry ; "and four women appeared to have lost their lives by being pressed by the crowd ; these I believe are the fatal effects of the meeting." I believe them to have been the "fatal effects" of the violent dispersion "of the meeting." With respect to the assertion of *four* women having lost their lives, it is however, an inaccuracy—one only having been crushed to death in a cellar. As to the statement, that "several pistols were fired by the mob," it is entirely unsupported, all the firing yet alleged, having been traced either to the 88th, or to the Yeomanry. That several shots were fired by the former, was proved on the Oldham Inquest ; and there was evidence ready with respect to the discharge of at least one pistol by the latter, when the adjournment took place. But, where is the account as

for the most part, continued so all the evening The capture of Hunt took place before two o'clock, and I forgot to mention, that *all their colours, drums, &c. were taken or destroyed*: since that I have been to the Infirmary, and found myself justified in making the report I have; but Mr. Norris now tells me, that one or two more than I have mentioned may have lost their lives. The parties apprehended will have their cases proceeded on to-morrow; *but it appears that there may arise difficulties as to the nature of some of their crimes, on which it may be necessary to consult Government.* (v)

The whole Committee of Magistrates will assemble to-morrow as usual. During the afternoon, and part of the evening, parts of the town have been in a very disturbed state, and numerous applications made for military. These have been supplied, but in some cases have, *in the Irish part of the town, been obliged to fire, I trust without any bad effect as to life, in any instance.* At present, every thing seems quiet; the reports agree with that, and

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to the "effect" of one pistol fired by the "mob, deposed to before Colonel Fletcher?" Was not this of sufficient importance to come before his Majesty's Ministers? Or was the affidavit upon further inspection, thrown aside as *unfit for service*? I hope I am not disposed to be uncandid towards Mr. Hay, but I can only view the expressions of regret which occur in the commencement of the sentence which succeeds that, on which I have been commenting, as the mere common-place cant of affected humanity, which it would not have been *decent* to omit; and which are in perfect keeping and congruity with the nauseous vanity of the remainder of the sentence. Never was there a grosser attack, never a more groundless aspersion, on the character of the inhabitants of Manchester. Mr. Hay is not to confound his frightened, affidavit-making friends with "the whole town." For myself, I never witnessed such a strong, though, from motives of prudence, restrained expression of horror, astonishment, and dismay, as on that dreadful occasion.

(v) It seems the magistrates could not tell what to do with Mr. Hunt, when they had got him. Why, then, this breathless haste to apprehend him? Why, then, place the safety of so many thousands of persons in jeopardy, to take into custody a man, of whose escape from the reach of public justice, they will not *pretend* to have been afraid? Why was he, *at all hazards*, to be seized and committed upon some undetermined charge, the evidence to substantiate which was *subsequently to be sought*?

I hope that we shall have a quiet night. I have omitted to mention, that *the active part of the meeting may be said to have come in wholly from the country; and that it did not consist of less than 20,000 men, &c.* The flag on which was "Equal representation or death," was a black one; and in addition, on the same side, had "No boroughmongering—unite, and be free;" at the bottom, "Saddleworth, Lees, and Morley Union;" on the reverse, "No Corn Laws:—Taxation without representation, is unjust and tyrannical." On the Middleton flag was, "Let us die like men, and not be sold like slaves;" reverse, "Liberty is the birthright of man."

I close my letter at a quarter before eleven; every thing remains quiet—many of the troops have returned to the barracks, with the consent of the Magistrates. I have to apologize to your Lordship for the haste in which this is written, but I trust that the haste will naturally be accounted for.

I have the honour to be, my Lord,

With sincere respect,

Your Lordship's faithful and obedient humble Servant,

W. R. HAY.

To the Right Hon. Viscount Sidmouth,

One of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State,

&c. &c. &c.

*Head Quarters,*

*Pontefract, August 17th, 1819, Nine A. M.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward the accompanying copy of an official report which I have just received from Lieutenant-Colonel L'Estrange, in command of the troops in Manchester and its immediate neighbourhood, which I consider of sufficient consequence to send by express, as it will be one day sooner before your Lordship.



I most sincerely regret that the employment of military in aid of the civil power should have been necessary ; but I trust it will appear to your Lordship, *that the utmost forbearance, consistent with their duty*, has been evinced by Lieutenant-Colonel L'Estrange, with the troops under his command : and I hope it will meet your approval, his having employed the corps of Cheshire and Manchester Yeomanry Cavalry, who, at the request of the Magistrates, had assembled with the greatest alacrity in full numbers, and had placed themselves at the Lieutenant Colonel's disposal.

By the latest account, I understand the town of Manchester has become more quiet. I shall await here a further report, and shall hold in readiness to move at the shortest notice, all the disposable forces under my orders.

I have the honour to be,

Your Lordship's very obedient humble Servant,

JOHN BYNG, Major-General.

The Right Honourable the Secretary of State,

Home Department.

*Manchester, August 16, 1819.*

*Eight o'Clock, P. M.*

Sir,

THE Magistrates assembled here in consequence of the disturbed state of this district, directed me to have the troops in readiness to assist the civil power in case of necessity, at the time of the meeting proposed for this day.

In concurrence with their wishes, and after consultation with them, the military were prepared and arrangements made, such as then seemed calculated to meet any occasion, in which the aid of the troops might be required to assist the civil power. The Magistrates were in attendance near St. Peter's Church; and Mr. Trafford, a Justice of the Peace for the counties of Chester and Lancaster,

was appointed to remain with the cavalry. Early in the afternoon, *the civil power finding it necessary that the troops should act in aid of them, it was deemed expedient that the cavalry should advance*; and a warrant was executed, *preceded by the civil authority*, under which, two persons, Hunt and Johnson, named therein, were arrested; as were also two other persons, named Saxton and Sykes, who were active, as I am told, on the hustings. *This service was performed with the assistance of the cavalry.*

The infantry was in readiness, but I determined not to bring them in contact with the people, unless compelled to do so by urgent necessity; *not a shot therefore has been fired by any of the military, though several have been fired by the populace against the troops.* (w) I have, however, great regret in stating, that *some of the unfortunate people who attended this meeting, have suffered from sabre wounds, and many from the pressure of the crowd.* One of the Manchester Yeomanry, if not dead, lies without hope of recovery; it is understood he was struck with a stone. One of the special Constables has been killed. The Manchester Yeomanry under Major Trafford, and the Cheshire Yeomanry under Lieutenant Colonel Townsend, who had come on a very short notice from the county Magistrates (many of them from a great distance,) *were most active and efficient in discharge of their duty.*—The Committee, now sitting, consider it necessary to keep all the troops ready, though every means will be adopted to prevent the necessity of their acting.

I have, &c.

GEORGE L'ESTRANGE,  
Lieutenant-Colonel 31st Regiment.

Major-General Sir John Byng, K. C. B.

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(w) This statement has been rebutted in my remarks on Mr. Hay's letter.

Manchester, August 17, 1819.

My Lord,

MR. HAY and Mr. Hardman having left town this evening, on a mission to your Lordship and to government, it is unnecessary for me to give you any information up to the period when they left, as they are fully informed.

Since their departure, the town has continued to assume a gloomy aspect, as the night has approached, and at this hour (a quarter from ten) all the civil and military authorities are in action throughout the town. Great numbers assembled this evening, from eight to nine, about the New Cross, *but did not do any act of violence, though evidently of the description disposed to do so.* Soldiers are placed there, and bodies of special constables, with orders in the first instance for the constables to act, and afterwards, in case of need, the military to disperse the mob. The riot act was not read this evening when I first went up, about six o'clock, though some stones had before been thrown at one or two houses, and a few at the military; yet I found matters peaceable and quiet, and the offending parties straggling about, and at considerable distances, and I hoped they would disperse. They did not, however, disperse; but the numbers considerably increased at the distances, and I found it necessary to communicate instantly with Col. L'Estrange, &c. The military have, in consequence, been strengthened in that quarter, and at present, every thing, I believe, remains quiet, although it can alone be attributed to the full exertion or appearance of the military strength.

I am, my Lord,

Your Lordship's faithful

And humble servant,

J. NORRIS.

To Viscount Sidmouth.

Examination of James Murrey, of No. 2, Withy Grove, Manchester, Confectioner, who, on his Oath, saith,

That on Sunday last, the 15th instant, he was at White Moss, near Middleton, about five miles from Manchester, between three and four o'clock in the morning, and saw there assembled between 14 and 1500 men; the greatest number of whom were formed in two bodies, in the form of solid squares; the remainder were in small parties of between twenty and thirty each; there were about thirty such parties, each under the direction of a person acting as a drill serjeant, and were going through military movements; that Examinant went amongst them, and immediately one of the drill serjeants asked him to fall in. He said, he thought he should soon, or gave some such answer; he then began to move away; upon which, some persons, who were drilling, cried out "Spies."—This Examinant, and William Shawcross, and Thomas Rymer, and his son (all of whom had accompanied this Examinant from Manchester), continued to retire; the body of men then cried out, "Mill them, murder them." Near one hundred men then pursued this Examinant and his companions; they overtook them near a lane end, at the edge of the Moss, and began to pelt them with clods of earth—they at last came up to the Examinant and his companions, and beat them very severely—Examinant begged they would not murder him; but the general cry was, "Damn him, kill him—murder him." Examinant said, "You treat *me* very differently to what nations treat each other's prisoners when *they* are at war. Suppose that *I* am an enemy, you ought to treat *me* as a prisoner:" they said, "*How will you treat us, if you take us prisoners when we come to Manchester?*"

*Examinant knew at the time that a meeting was appointed for the next day (Monday) at Manchester.*

The men kept beating Examinant all the time; at last they debated among themselves whether they would kill



Examinant or forgive him, and they determined to forgive him, provided he would go down upon his knees and beg pardon to them, and swear never to be a king's man again, or to mention the name of a king. Examinant complied, to save his life, they standing over him with sticks, as he apprehended, to murder him, provided he had objected. They afterwards went away. Examinant was not previously acquainted with any of the persons assembled that he saw, but is certain that he should know again two of those who beat him.

The greatest part of the number assembled had stout sticks, from three to four feet long.

In consequence of the ill treatment received by Examinant as above, he was confined to his bed for three days.

JAMES MURREY.(x)

Sworn at Manchester, before me, this

21st day of August, 1819.

Ra. Fletcher.

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*Grand Jury Room, Chester Castle,  
Sept. 3, 1819.*

My Lord,

I HAVE been directed by the Grand Jury of the County of Chester, as their Foreman, to forward the enclosed to your Lordship, as a private communication;

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(x) This person is one of a number of constables, &c. who committed a most outrageous assault on some of Mr. Hunt's friends, in a private room, after the public dinner at the Spread Eagle Inn, in January last. As numbers of persons went to witness the drilling, without receiving any molestation or insult, it is believed that a knowledge of Murrey's own previous conduct, procured him the beating he unquestionably received. He gave a tolerable sample of his talents at mistatement on the 24th of September, when he affirmed positively, at the New Bailey, that Thomas Ryder, who was charged with crying "Hunt and Liberty," was one of the persons who assaulted him on the 15th of August; but subsequently, when the accused person had satisfactorily proved an *alibi*, Murrey retracted his charge.— See the *Times* of Sept. 27th.

and I have taken the liberty of enclosing, at the same time, a Copy of Resolutions entered into by the Grand Jury, expressive of their determination to support the Government, and enforce the laws, for the preservation of the peace of the county.

I have the honour to be,  
Your lordship's most obedient servant,  
JOHN THOMAS STANLEY.

The Lord Viscount Sidmouth,  
&c. &c. &c.

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(Private.)

Chester, September 3, 1819.

WE, the Grand Jury of the County Palatine of Chester, assembled at the assizes, holden for the said county, on the first day of September, 1819, feel it our bounden duty to represent to your Lordship, that from the information we have just received, we have strong reason to consider, that in the Stockport division of the hundred of Macclesfield in this county, and in certain parts of the Prestbury division of the said hundred, the lives and property of his Majesty's loyal subjects are in great peril; and that in *an adjoining County, by the active measures of terror and intimidation employed, the danger has, within the last fourteen days, assumed a more formidable character*; and we beg leave to add, that we understand his Majesty's Justices of the Peace labour under great difficulty, *from want of power to disperse meetings for drilling and for acquiring military discipline.* (Y)

JOHN THOMAS STANLEY,  
Foreman.

The Lord Viscount Sidmouth,  
&c. &c. &c.

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(Y) This letter proves, that the dispersion of the Manchester meeting had produced no other effect, than an increased irritation among the people. "The danger

*County Palatine of Chester.*

WE, the Grand Jury of the County Palatine of Chester, at the assizes holden at Chester, on the first day of September, 1819, feel it incumbent at this time to declare our indignation at the machinations of artful and itinerant demagogues, who disseminate papers of the most dangerous and seditious tendency; and at public meetings, with freedom in their mouths, and fraud and plunder in their hearts, employ the most inflammatory language; insidiously inculcate, under the specious veil of reform, hatred and contempt of our constitution, and instigate the ignorant and unwary even to exert physical force (that is, violence and open arms) for the enforcement of their visionary claims; at once useless to themselves, destructive of the rights and property of their fellow-subjects, and involving the country in one general ruin. Nor can we refrain from declaring our disgust and horror, at the odious and blasphemous publications poured forth throughout the country, in which the Holy Scriptures are held up to derision, reviled and scoffed at, and audaciously denounced to the people as false, with the malignant intention of eradicating from their minds all moral checks, and all the hopes and comforts to be derived from religion. *But with the most serious and peculiar anxiety and detestation, we contemplate the unremitting exertions to poison the minds of the rising generation, with the same horrid and detestable doctrines.* (z)

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has within the last 14 days (*i. e.* since the 16th of August) assumed a more formidable character." For this the Cheshire Grand Jury had to thank the Manchester magistrates; and if the former were instructed by the Justices to complain of their "want of power to disperse meetings for drilling, and for acquiring military discipline," it surely follows, *a fortiori*, that the latter were not legally possessed of power to disperse a meeting, where even those pretexts were withheld.

(z) The only "blasphemous publications," of the circulation of which in this neighbourhood I have any knowledge, are those which have issued from the shop of Carlile. I am enabled *positively and distinctly* to state, that immediately after

We, therefore, strongly impressed with the excellence of our constitution, protecting all ranks and degrees of society, are firmly resolved, by every means in our power, to enforce the due execution of the laws, against the seditious and disaffected ; and against all, who either by acts or otherwise, endanger the public peace and safety of the realm.

JOHN THOMAS STANLEY, Foreman.

BELGRAVE	CLEM. SWETENHAM
H. M. MAINWARING	H. C. COTTON
D. DAVENPORT	E. STRACEY
WILBR. EGERTON	THOS. MARSHALL
C. CHOLMONDELEY	T. CHOLMONDELEY
THOS. C. CLUTTON	ROBT. HIBBERT
R. LEYCESTER, JUN.	JOHN ISHERWOOD
D. ASHLEY	ROBT. TAYLOR
GEO. WILBRAHAM	H.W.WORTHINGTON
E. D. DAVENPORT	THOS. BARKER

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*Knowsley, September 7, 1819.*

My Lord,

I HAVE been directed by the Grand Jury, assembled at the present Assizes for this county, to sign, as their Foreman, their statement of the unhappily disturbed situation in which (upon examination, which they have

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the dispersion of the meeting of the 16th of August, the circulation of "The Republican," in this district, *increased three-fold*. It seems, therefore, that military execution is but an ineffective recipe for the cure of "blasphemy." That there have been many other vile periodical publications issued, I have no doubt ; but if the feelings and passions of the people had not been strongly excited, by the ill treatment they have received, they would have rejected the garbage with disgust. The length of time that they have been permitted to go on, without being checked, renders it probable, that his majesty's ministers felt they were doing good service to them. Indeed, the proposed restrictions upon the press, in justification of which they are brought forward, proves this fact beyond all question.



thought it their duty to make) they have found the county, or rather a large district of it, to be placed.

In compliance, therefore, with their directions, I have now the honour to lay before your Lordship the accompanying statement, a copy of which, I have also been directed to lay before the Lord Lieutenant of the county, and

I remain,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

Most obedient humble servant,

STANLEY.

The Lord Sidmouth,

&c. &c. &c.

The Grand Jury of the County of Lancaster have thought it their duty to inquire into the present state of the disturbed districts of that county, *and they have examined persons who appeared to them the most competent to give accurate information on the subject.*

From the result of that inquiry it appears, that the most inflammatory publications have for some time been industriously circulated, at a price which puts them very generally into the hands of the poorest classes of society. The training and military drilling of large bodies of men, under regular leaders, have for some time been carried on to a great extent, *and the times chosen for the purpose, are principally during the night, or at such hours as seem best calculated to elude public observation.* Marching, and other military movements, are practised with great precision; and the words of command are promptly and implicitly obeyed. *It has not come to the knowledge of the Grand Jury, that arms have been used on these occasions;* and though there is no doubt that weapons of offence have been manufactured, yet to what amount does not appear.

One of the most powerful engines to which the disaffected have resorted, is a system of intimidation, which prevails to a most serious and alarming degree. *Not only have threats to persons and property been made use of,* AND PUT INTO EXECUTION, but even combinations have been formed, to discountenance and to ruin those publicans and shopkeepers, who have come forward in support of the civil power. To such an extent does this prevail, that individuals who are well-disposed, are deterred from declaring the sentiments which they really entertain, or from giving information which may lead to the detection of offenders.

Whatever may be the real object of those, who have obtained an influence over the minds of the misguided, there is reason to believe, *from the declarations which have been openly and avowedly made,* that the object of the lower classes of these people in general, *is no other than to reverse the orders of society, which have so long been established, and to wrest by force from the present possessors, and to divide among themselves, the landed property of the country.*

The Magistrates who act in the disturbed districts, and who are few in number, and harassed by continued and unremitting attention to their duties, state themselves to be unable to preserve the public peace, under any circumstances of peculiar agitation.

Resort has recently been had to the Watch and Ward Act; but in many parts of the above-mentioned districts, the measure is, for obvious reasons, incapable of being carried into effect, and in others has proved wholly inefficacious. *Indeed, in one populous district, no warrant for ordinary offences, or other legal process, can be executed; the payment of taxes has ceased, and the landlords are threatened with the discontinuance of their rents.*

The Grand Jury think it their duty to submit these facts and observations to the Lord Lieutenant of the County, and to his Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department, and at the same time to express their firm determination to support the Government of the Country, and to maintain unimpaired the Constitution, as at present established in Church and State. (a)

Signed by direction of the Grand Jury,  
 STANLEY,  
 Foreman.

Grand Jury Room, Lancaster,  
 Sept. 6, 1819.

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(a) Upon this document, I feel it difficult to comment according to my conception of its deserts. The character and high consideration of the gentlemen, forming the Lancashire Grand Jury, must shield them from wanton or intemperate blame, even if considerations of personal prudence did not necessarily restrain my pen. But, however high may be my respect for the public character or the private virtues of the members of the Grand Jury, my anxiety for the preservation of the uncontaminated and unimpeachable purity of the laws of England, is a still more powerful feeling. For, if ever there be the slightest ground to justify a belief—if ever there be even a prevalent suspicion, that political partialities have the slightest influence in determining the decisions of the former, then adieu ! a long and lasting adieu ! to public confidence in the equal administration of the laws, and in the unbending integrity of our criminal jurisprudence. Hence it is most manifestly desirable, that Grand Juries should always keep themselves studiously aloof from any interference in the political turmoils of the day ; or, if their sense of duty induce them to adopt any political declaration, that they should preserve a broad and palpable distinction between their conduct as Grand Jurors, and as politicians, and never suffer themselves to throw public obloquy on the character, and motives, and conduct of others, on that partial and *ex parte* evidence ; which, nevertheless in their official capacity as Grand Jurors, they would justly and properly put in a condition for being answered, by finding, upon its authority, a bill of indictment. If, where an indictment is found, the evidence for the prosecution be defective, either in force or truth, it is met, and its effects are obviated, by the testimony for the defence. But what man, or what body of men, can hope to repel a political charge, even though it be unjust, which is supported, not by the partial testimony of an interested prosecutor, but upon the personal avouch of a Lancashire Grand Jury ? And further, should not any political declaration, which such a body may think it right to make, be addressed to the public at large, who might see their opinions, learn by their advice, and profit by their experience, if it did not conform to their judgment ? Ought we not to regard with the

*Manchester Police Office,*  
September 16, 1819.

My Lord,

WE have avoided troubling your Lordship with frequent communications, knowing that our highly esteemed

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most scrupulous jealousy any *private* communication between any constituent part of our criminal Courts of Justice, and a minister of state? Particularly at a period, when those courts are filled with prosecutions, to which that minister is almost personally a party. And if circumstances should arise to bring him, or any of the subordinate administrators of the law, either immediately or virtually before the Grand Jury, on the prosecution of those whom they also prosecute, can the latter, whatever may be the real state of the case—*can* they have that implicit confidence in the decisions of the Grand Jury, which, but for their political declarations, would unreservedly have been expressed and felt? This is no reflection upon the Grand Jury, for we all well know, and daily feel, how difficult it is, on occasions where impartiality is an imperative duty, entirely to free the mind from the operation of political prejudices on the one hand, or partialities on the other. But, when in the place of suppositions, we have facts—when we see bills of Indictment reciprocally presented by the two parties—by those whom the Grand Jury have consulted, against those whom they have denounced, and by those whom they have denounced, against those whom they have consulted, (for the magistrates were virtually implicated in the charges brought against the Yeomanry, at the last Lancaster assizes, and would have been actually so, but that the prosecutors were not then in a condition to prove that the latter proceeded under the orders of the former;)—can we, without absolutely forgetting the influence of human passions—without entirely overlooking the constitution of human nature itself, expect that the Grand Jury should regard both parties with equal impartiality, when with one of them they had already committed, or were prepared to commit themselves as partizans, in direct opposition to the other? I impute no blame to the Grand Jury—they would not, I am sure, intentionally act wrong—but HE who taught us to pray, that we might not be led into temptation, never meant that we should blindly or needlessly rush into it.

But the most serious part of the question, yet remains to be considered. Even when the safety or the reputation of a single individual is concerned, when he is accused merely of a common offence, the law not only presumes him innocent until he is proved to be guilty, but takes care that the evidence by which his guilt is ascertained shall be definite in its character, and precise in its application; leaving the truth of it to be determined by a Jury, who, after hearing all the testimony in defence, decide which way the balance of credibility inclines. Who, however, appeared before this Jury, *Grand Jury* no longer in respect of their functions or their duties, as **THE ADVOCATE OF THE PEOPLE**? By whom were the witnesses in their favour produced, or the evidence against them sifted and scrutinized, and cross examined? Or was there none but on one side? Was there no attempt to watch the



friend Mr. Norris was in constant correspondence with the Home Department.

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conflict of opposing testimony, and thence elicit the truth? Let us take a few passages from the letter to Lord Sidmouth, and from them, form our opinion upon the subject. I shall yet, however, further premise, that, in proportion as the crime alleged is enormous, in such proportion should be increased the clearness, the precision, the strength, of that testimony by which the proof of it is to be substantiated. Nor should we condemn a great number of persons on the same *quantum* of evidence, which would justly be decisive against an individual. Hence we ought to require, that a charge, by which the liberty, if not the lives, of so many tens perhaps hundreds of thousands of our fellow countrymen is involved, should be supported, not by presumptions, however pregnant, but by proof, the most ample, formal, and infallible. The Grand Jury say, "they have examined persons, who appeared to them, the most competent to give accurate information upon the subject." Who those persons are, they do not inform us; and I confess myself quite at a loss to conceive upon what foundation they place the right, or can be prepared to defend the practice, of examining witnesses, unconnected with any indictment laid officially before them, or with any presentment which they were about to make to the court. But they have "examined the persons most competent to give information." Where are the examinations? Were they taken upon oath? Were the parties disinterested witnesses? Or had they any inducements to create an impression, which might operate against accused persons of whom they themselves were directly or indirectly the prosecutors? It is true, that the date of this document will place it at the conclusion of the sittings of the Grand Jury. But, might not the evidence have been taken previously, though the document was not signed? Or at least might not the feelings which prompted the determination thus to address Lord Sidmouth, have been previously existent, though the act itself were not then consummated? Upon these points, without meaning any disrespect to the Grand Jury, I think the Country has a right to expect to be informed.

Having already fully examined the affidavits respecting drilling, upon that part of the address of the Grand Jury, which relates to the same subject, I shall say nothing. The assertion, that "not only have threats to persons and property been made "use of, and put into execution; but even combinations have been formed, to discountenance and ruin those shop-keepers, who have come forward in aid of the civil "power," is unfortunately not wholly unfounded. Since the 16th of August, but *not before that day*, such attacks have in a few, but only a very few instances been made, and then *solely* on persons whose unnecessary and gratuitous violence had rendered them particularly obnoxious. Nor can it be denied, that "combinations have also been formed to discountenance and ruin (but simply, by the poor withholding their own custom from them,) those publicans and shopkeepers," the natural consequence of whose own behaviour, was to give rise to them. But whatever degree of blame may attach to combinations such as I have been noticing, it must not be inferred, that they are confined to the Reformers. On the contrary, not only have they been strenuously recommended in the loyal newspapers, but they have been put in force by *ladies*, or at least persons, who should have acted as such, going round the town, and

We deem it however our duty to state some of the difficulties with which we have had to contend, and which, as they are rapidly increasing, will press heavily on the gentlemen who are shortly to succeed us in office.

using violent threats, to induce shopkeepers to sign the self-styled "loyal declarations."

The Grand Jury afterwards proceed: "there is reason to believe, from the declarations which have been openly made, that the object of the lower classes of these people in general, is no other than to reverse the orders of society which have so long been established, and to wrest by force from the present possessors, and to divide amongst themselves, the landed property of the country." The persons against whom this charge is made, comprise a vast and daily increasing majority of the inhabitants, in the most populous districts of the kingdom. When, where, and by whom, were these "declarations made?" Who are the witnesses, by whose credit the accusation is supported? Or even, if individuals have made such declarations, is it just, that hundreds of thousands should be implicated in the follies, the faults, or the crimes, of a few? They who presume any considerable portion of the labouring poor to harbour so atrocious a project, are, if possible, more ignorant with respect to their intelligence, than unjust in the estimation of their principles. The poor, taken as a body, (I am ready to stake my life for the truth of the assertion,) have no wish whatever, to invade the property of their affluent neighbours; but, when the most arduous and unremitting industry scarce serves to afford them a scanty and stinted sustenance—when, in place of enjoying those comforts to which their industry gives them a right, they are, for successive weeks, and months, and years, in want even of the necessities of life—when they know, (and of that fact they are well informed,) that taxation, by enhancing the price of every article of food, or clothes, absorbs nearly the half even of their miserable earnings; can it be a matter of surprise, that they complain and are dissatisfied? When year after year passes away, yet relief comes not, nor the pressure of distress is lightened; as the lengthening period of its duration exhausts the ability to sustain it—when peace, so long associated with the ideas of plenty, is to them only a continuation of suffering, ought we to wonder, if they should not scrupulously keep within the bounds of measured and moderate remonstrance? But when treason is the crime alleged, and half the nation are the parties accused, what is the statement of the Grand Jury? That "*there is reason to believe!*" Are the people of England to be satisfied with this vague and undefined suspicion? Is it not unjust to build so serious a charge upon so untenable a basis? Would it not be monstrous to credit it? But the Grand Jury proceed. "In one populous district, no warrant for ordinary offences, or other legal process, can be executed—the payment of taxes has ceased, and the landlords are threatened with the discontinuance of their rents." I inquire where that district lies? Strange indeed it is, that no source of private information—no vehicle of public intelligence, should have communicated this alarming fact, till we find it thus *whispered into Lord Sidmouth's ear*, by the Lancashire Grand Jury: why have we never heard of it before? Was it concealed from Mr. Harrop? Or did it stagger his credulity? Did Mr. Wheeler hesitate to adopt it? Why did it not occupy a place in the *veracious*

Before Mr. Hunt made his appearance here, his followers had given us much trouble ; they have now acquired so powerful an ascendancy in the neighbourhood, that he is able at any time to agitate this town most seriously ; and by a very short notice to move an overwhelming population in any direction, *and for almost any purpose.*

Your Lordship has, we believe, already been made acquainted with the decease of Campbell, one of our supernumeraries, who was literally stoned to death, publicly, in the forenoon of the 17 ult. *MERELY because he was connected with this office. (b)*

Another special constable now lies in the infirmary dangerously wounded under similar circumstances.

More than a week before the meeting of the 16th ult. two of our beadles, who were protecting a man whilst posting the Prince Regent's Proclamation, were shamefully abused as well as the man, and held prisoners, at the New Cross, by a mob of more than five hundred persons.

The Boroughreeve and ourselves, with our deputy and four assistants, having proceeded to the spot, were also

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columns of the Post, or the Sun, the Courier, or the New Times ? Or was it purposely concealed from them as a *bonne bouche*, to stimulate the political appetite of the gentlemen at the assizes ? I confidently trust however, that the principles of British Justice, and of British Law, cannot be so far forgotten or overlooked, as that this astounding statement, unsupported and unauthenticated as it is, can receive a moment's credence. The "payment of taxes" may have "ceased;" the payment of "Rents" may have been "discontinued;" but, if it be so, to poverty and not politics, must we look for the cause.

(b) In the Morning Chronicle, of the 18th September, will be found a report of the Inquest held on this person. This report is much less minute and formal than might have been expected, because the Coroner (perhaps, with a view to prevent the discovery of the deception here attempted to be practised on Lord Sidmouth, and ultimately on the public,) refused to permit the reporter to take notes. Five or six witnesses proved that Campbell had been firing pistols *loaded with ball*, hours before he received the ill-treatment which caused his death. *Three of the Jury stated that he was in the habit of firing pistols.* It is astonishing that the Constables of Manchester should have lent themselves to the propagation of such a mischievous misrepresentation ; particularly as the date of this letter (*the day after the Inquest*) precludes the possibility of a supposition, that they could have forgotten the nature of the evidence.

violently attacked and beaten away with stones, previously taken up from the pavement for the purpose.

For some time previously to the 16th ult. well dressed persons were sure to be insulted if they shewed themselves in the neighbourhood of New Cross, Newton-lane, Ancoats, &c. &c. and were it not for the certainty, that the military could soon be at hand, no decent person would now venture near those places. (c)

Since Mr. Hunt's arrival here, the respectable householders have been kept in almost constant alarm, and the noise and uproar which uniformly attends his movements have produced the *most dangerous consequences to many families.*

*Amongst persons unconnected with business, a general disposition prevails to leave the neighbourhood; and of those who are able to retire from trade, a considerable proportion seems determined to do so.*

*The difficulty in collecting rents from those of the lower orders who are able to pay, increases daily, and serious depression in the value of property is consequently taking place.* (d)

*We have also much reason to fear that numbers, whom we had looked upon as neutral with respect to Mr. Hunt, are becoming partizans; and we ought not to disguise the fact, that a degree of intimidation very generally prevails, which deprives us of the usually efficient support and cordial assistance of some of our principal inhabitants.* (e)

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(c) Though candour obliges me to admit that there is some foundation for these complaints, yet, it is beyond doubt that in many cases, where persons have been insulted, their own conduct has provoked it. With respect to the Beadles, no treatment that they can have received, exhibits more brutality than they have often displayed. This is not meant to justify any abuse they may have received, but it naturally enough accounts for it.

(d) This assertion would have been more likely to obtain credit, if the Constables had acquainted us upon what authority they make it. How can they form an off-hand judgement, as to who amongst the "lower orders" are able to pay their rents? Besides, as poverty is daily increasing amongst the labourers, the difficulty of obtaining payment of rents will necessarily be enhanced.

(e) The whole of this paragraph proves, as was the fact, notwithstanding the complexion which the Constables attempt to give to their statement, that there was



The Special Constables, as a body, were all that we could wish, and have given us abundant proofs of their loyalty and spirit; *but of those who are shopkeepers or publicans, many have so much lost their custom, that they must either cease acting or be ruined.*

The sacrifice of wealth and comforts which the Magistrates have willingly made, can only be duly appreciated by ourselves, and we are bound to declare our belief, that nothing but the *purest patriotism* could have influenced or supported them. (f)

An anxious desire to serve the public faithfully, has completely exhausted our worthy colleague, the Borough-reeve, and his life is still in danger; and, indeed, we are ourselves so much worn out, that we should shortly become unequal to our duty, were it not for the prospect of our year being soon ended.

If we are asked, what has occasioned this state of society here? we must reply, the licentiousness of the press chiefly, aided by the inflammatory speeches of itinerant demagogues, and the *establishment of schools* for instructing adults, as well as children, to revile and despise the civil and RELIGIOUS institutions of the country. (g)

Whatever constitutional health or strength our successors in office may fortunately possess, or however zealous

a strong and general disapprobation of their public conduct. Those to whom they allude as becoming "partizans" of Mr. Hunt, were the enemies of military execution and magisterial oppression.

(f) I am at a loss to conceive what sacrifices of "wealth," our Magistrates can have made. When such a claim to public approbation is put forwards on their behalf, it ceases to be invidious to remark with respect to some of them, that, if they have sacrificed "wealth," it was none of their own. They may have supposed themselves to be influenced by the "purest patriotism," but it was once said to persons whose conduct was much less questionable; "*ye know not what spirit ye are of.*"

(g) I invite these gentlemen to point out one school, either in Manchester or elsewhere, answering to the description they have drawn. An accurate investigation of the "union schools," in this and the surrounding towns, was undertaken by an intimate friend of mine, at the request of a most respectable member of parliament; the result of which enables me positively to aver, *that there is not a parti-*

they may be in the discharge of their duty, we are firmly persuaded, my Lord, *things cannot long go on in this way*, (h) and we hope this conviction will be our apology for writing so much at length on this occasion.

We have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

Most obedient humble servants,

JOHN MOORE, JUN.

JONATHAN ANDREW,

Constables.

To the Right Hon.

Lord Viscount Sidmouth,

&c. &c. &c.

London.

*Macclesfield, Cheshire, August 18, 1819.*

My Lord,

I BEG leave to acquaint your Lordship, that a mob of the reformers assembled last night about half past eight o'clock P. M., in the market-place in this town: the Mayor read the Riot Act about half past eight P. M.; about nine the mob proceeded to a very outrageous at-

*cle of truth in the statement here made.* In all the schools so designated, the Bible is the principal book used, religious services are regularly performed, and politics are sedulously and invariably avoided. They have however, it must be confessed, the *demerit* of also avoiding those anti-British and Tory principles, so diligently inculcated at some other Sunday schools.

(h) If Lord Sidmouth can attach any definite idea to the phrase, "things cannot long go on in this way," I must say he has a clearer comprehension than myself. I hope however the Constables, if they refer to the state of things since the 16th August, will prove to be true prophets. It is high time that the dominion of law should be re-established, and that those who have broken it, whether Magistrates, Yeomen, Constables, or reformers, should be brought to punishment. At an earlier period of their office, a little more moderation would have saved both the Country and the Constables a world of trouble and uneasiness.

tack on the shop and printing-shop of Mr. Jonathan Wilson, printer of the Macclesfield Courier, and demolished the door and windows ; they also attacked the house of Mr. Thomas Grimsditch, solicitor, an officer in the Cheshire Yeomanry Cavalry, in the Macclesfield troop ; they broke all his front windows ; they attacked my house and demolished my front windows, &c. They took advantage of the absence of our cavalry on duty at Manchester, and part of the 31st regiment of foot, which were here till last night. Twelve at night an express came from Manchester ordering them to Stockport, so that we were left quite defenceless : we turned out and restored peace at last ; and this morning, at five A.M., the party of the 31st regiment arrived here from Stockport, and at ten A.M., our two troops of cavalry arrived from Manchester.—The Mayor, accompanied by the rest of the Magistrates of this borough, read the Riot Act, and *declared the town in a state of rebellion, and delivered it up to the charge of the military*, from the circumstance of their having last night attacked the post office : and I humbly submit, that for the better and future security of the town, and persons and property, a troop of horse stationed here for a while would remove and disperse all danger. The whole most humbly submitted by, (i)

Your Lordship's most obedient

humble Servant to command,

TIM. JONES.

Lord Viscount Sidmouth.

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Glasgow, 22d August, 1819.

My Lord,

*IT affords me great satisfaction and pleasure that I*

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(i) Either Tim. Jones does not tell a straight forward story, or the Macclesfield Mayor acts upon a new system. It is a strange course of proceeding, to “read the Riot Act, declare the town in a state of rebellion, and deliver it up to the charge of the military” on the 18th, because a riot was committed on the 17th of August.

*have it in my power to inform your lordship, that the meeting of yesterday ended without any breach of the peace, or even disturbance. We had every preparation made, by having the special constabulary to the number of about four hundred assembled, as well as all the police and other civil officers, and also the military drawn up in the barrack-yard, to act in case the civil power should prove inefficient. Although all this was done without publicity or bustle, still it was not unknown to the crowd: indeed, in the speeches I understood that peace and good order were strongly inculcated by the argument of the preparations made to oppose contrary conduct. To the presence of the military do we therefore owe our present state. The object of the meeting on Thursday being of a nature more likely to draw an assemblage of the poorer classes, than the common one of parliament reform, and greater pains having been taken to bring them from every quarter, we contemplate that it will be much more numerously attended. God grant that it may end as peaceably.*

My Lord, I have the honour to remain

Your Lordship's faithful servant,

HENRY MONTEITH.

Right Hon. Lord Sidmouth,

&c. &c. &c.

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*Leamington, 26th August, 1819.*

My Lord,

I HAVE this morning received a letter dated 20th inst. from Mr. Haigh, Mr. Haigh Allen, and Mr. Horsfall, three Magistrates acting at Huddersfield and in its neighbourhood, a copy of which I send for your Lordship's information.

No-doubt it would have been more satisfactory had no meeting whatever taken place; but it is a subject of satisfaction that, taking place, it passed off peaceably, and



*that the assembled dispersed quietly, without the interference of any constituted authority; and no less so, that though a second meeting was announced for the following evening, it did not take place.*

I trust, however, that your Lordship will approve the active vigilance of these Magistrates, and the precautionary measures which they have adopted, by swearing in a number of special constables, and by calling out the Huddersfield troop of yeomanry on permanent duty, and I am confident your Lordship may rely on their discretion, *that the constituted authorities will not* BE UNNECESSARILY COMMITTED IN DOUBTFUL CASES, *but their powers used only* WHEN MANIFEST NECESSITY SHALL JUSTIFY THEIR EXERCISE. (k)

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

&c. &c. &c.

WENTWORTH FITZWILLIAM.

Viscount Sidmouth,

&c. &c. &c.

*Huddersfield, August 20th, 1819.*

My Lord,

WE think it our duty to inform your Lordship, that last evening, about seven o'clock, a large multitude of people was suddenly assembled within half a mile of the town, to the number (as near as we can ascertain), of three thousand. *A person from Manchester* related to them what had taken place there, and concluded by telling them that now was the time to be revenged. (l) Another person then said, that all who were willing to sup-

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(k) Would to God, that such discretion had been exercised here on the 16th of August. What misery, what heart-burnings, what animosities, and, above all, what infringements upon our constitutional rights, might not have been avoided!

(l) There can be very little doubt that the person here alluded to, actually was (as the postscript intimates him to have been), a spy.

port the cause of radical reform *by force, by physical force*, should signify the same in the usual way; which was answered by a tremendous shout from the multitude: he then informed them, that a meeting would be held the following night at Fixby Park, (about a mile and a half from Huddersfield). With arms? was asked by the multitude. He said, we will not say with arms; but all persons are requested to provide themselves with such things as may in any way whatever be useful to them.

We find that there have been several evening meetings suddenly called in different parts of the neighbourhood, since Tuesday, and we have every reason to believe that the meeting to-night is to be a concentrated meeting, as we are informed that a meeting in the neighbourhood of Halifax has been adjourned to meet at Fixby to-night.

In consequence of these appearances, we have thought it our duty to order our troop of yeomanry cavalry to assemble this evening, upon permanent duty for three days; we have also sworn in a number of special constables, which we trust will meet with your Lordship's approbation.

We have the honour to be, with great respect,

Your Lordship's most obedient

humble servants,

(Signed) J. HAIGH.

B. HAIGH ALLEN.

JOHN HORSFALL.

Saturday morning.—The night has past over quietly. Numbers were seen returning to their homes late at night, most probably deterred from meeting by the precautions taken, *and by a report circulated among the people, that the man who addressed them from Manchester was a spy.*

(Signed) J. H.

B. H. L.

J. H.

To the Right Honourable Earl Fitzwilliam,

&c. &c. &c.

*Leamington, 28th August, 1819.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship, a copy of a letter, dated the 25th instant, which I received this morning from the Mayor of Leeds; likewise a copy of a requisition for convening a public meeting on the 30th inst. signed by certain householders of Wakefield, and left at the office of the clerk of the peace; which also I received this morning—I shall return immediately to Wentworth.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

&c. &c. &c.

WENTWORTH FITZWILLIAM.

Viscount Sidmouth,

&c. &c. &c.

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*Leeds, August 25th, 1819.*

My Lord,

I DULY received your Lordship's letter of the 19th announcing your intention, if no unpleasant accounts were received from Manchester, to set out the following day for Leamington.

I deem it necessary to acquaint your Lordship, that I think I perceive a considerable change working among our reformers. On Thursday last in the evening, a body of people, to the amount of several thousands, met upon Hunslet Moor, to discuss the events at Manchester, simply upon a notice given by posting up a few written papers in two or three conspicuous situations in the town. Last evening another meeting took place by the appointment of the former, when, notwithstanding a heavy fall of rain, it is calculated full 3,000 persons were present; with the additional excitements of drums and bands of music, to

which they marched from the adjoining townships. *They dispersed quietly.* I fear these circumstances, added to the frequent meeting, announce a growing confidence in themselves, and a determination on the part of their leaders to push matters to an extremity. They hold more violent language in their speeches, and dwell in exaggerated terms on the proceedings at Manchester; and Sherwin's Register of the 20th inst. of which I have found it difficult to obtain a copy, the whole being sold off, *is a most diabolical production*; he throws off all restraint, calls on the people to arm, states the impossibility of avoiding a revolution, or of subduing the people; and treats the idea of accommodation as ridiculous; *surely it is time to attack the authors of such dangerous productions.* I write this evening desiring Sir John Byng to order another troop of dragoons to Leeds. We have only one of thirty-two horses, which I think is too small a force to meet present appearances with.

I have the honour to be, my Lord,  
Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,  
G. BANKS.

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WE, the undersigned inhabitant householders of the town of Wakefield, do convene a public meeting to be held on Monday, 30th August, 1819, to take into consideration our unparalleled distress, (which we consider to have arisen from enormous taxation without representation,) and the most effectual and constitutional methods for the removal and prevention of the same occurring in future;

RICHARD BROWN, Plumber and Glazier, Westgate.

JOSEPH LOWE, Cloth Worker, Westgate.

SAMUEL MOORE, Cloth Worker, Westgate.

JOHN ROBINSON, Cordwainer, Kirkgate.

JOSEPH LOCKWOOD, Cordwainer, Nelson Street.



GEORGE MUSGREAVE, Waterman, Kirkgate.

JOSEPH INSON, Waterman, Kirkgate.

BENJAMIN HOWELL, jun. Waterman, Kirkgate.

The chair to be taken precisely at four o'clock in the afternoon.

*Wakefield, August 23d. 1819.*

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*Wentworth, August 31, 1819.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour of transmitting, for your Lordship's consideration, copies of three letters, all of which I have received this morning; 1st. from Colonel Horton, a Magistrate of the West Riding, resident near Halifax, dated the 27th instant; 2d. from the Mayor of Leeds, dated the 27th instant; 3d. from Mr. Foljambe, Deputy Clerk of the Peace, dated Monday evening, 9 o'clock.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

&c. &c. &c.

WENTWORTH FITZWILLIAM.

Viscount Sidmouth,

&c. &c. &c.

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(Copy.)

*Halifax, August 27, 1819.*

My Lord,

ATTENDING a general meeting of Magistrates yesterday, at Wakefield, to consider the additions to the House of Correction, I thought it necessary to give my opinion of the state of this part of the Riding; and I beg to communicate the same to your Lordship.

I have great reason to believe that the *lower orders*, in this part of the country, *are very much irritated by the lau-*

*dable conduct of the civil and military authorities at Manchester, and warmly espouse the cause of the Revolutionists; for such they are.*

*Speaking entirely of the actual labouring class, I have not a doubt that a very great majority have the above feeling, and would act upon it, if they dared, at this moment.*

Various assemblages have been held in this parish and Huddersfield, since the occurrences at Manchester. The object being (*as there is great reason to believe*) to determine as to the propriety of marching to Manchester to avenge themselves, which has not been thought prudent at present.

These assemblies were called *privately*, and it is very difficult to obtain correct information; but though I do not apprehend any immediate danger, I am well convinced there is reason to fear that some violent attempt will be made by the disaffected, if very great precautionary measures are not adopted. *It is quite certain the object is absolute Revolution; the attempt at which will cause much mischief.* This parish has always been much quieter than Huddersfield; but the disposition lately evinced, has induced Colonel Dearden and myself to swear in about three hundred special Constables, and to call a meeting of the principal inhabitants. *I intend to attempt to raise a troop of yeomanry cavalry here, and I have hopes of offering one to your Lordship. In the mean time I have stated to Lord Sidmouth, that it is necessary to society that one troop of regulars should be placed here. (m)*

I wish to add, that it was the opinion of all the Magi-

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(m) Were there any thing in the rank or character of the writer of this letter, to render his opinion a matter of importance, I should reply to it more at length. He only derives consequence, from being unfortunately placed in a situation, in which he may do mischief. His style ranks him as a fit associate for Mr. Lloyd. His neighbours however, it may be remarked, either did not coincide in his apprehensions of an attempt at "*absolute Revolution*," or did not like to be brought into contact with him, by the yeomanry scheme, which *completely failed*.

trates at Wakefield, amongst whom were Sir Francis Wood, Mr. Wortley, and Mr. Lowe, (with whom I coincide) that it is not by any means necessary your Lordship should hasten your return from Leamington at this moment.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your most obedient humble servant,

THOMAS HORTON.

Earl Fitzwilliam,

&c. &c.

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*Leeds, 27th August, 1819.*

(Copy)

My Lord,

I BEG your Lordship's reference to my letter of the 25th instant. The meeting of Magistrates which I mentioned it was my intention to convene for this day, has taken place. I stated at this meeting, that in consequence of the new symptoms which are showing themselves in the proceedings of the reformers, I had been induced to request Sir John Byng would send us another troop of cavalry, which he has consented to do. I also read to them the copy of the letter I had sent to your Lordship, and of one I had sent to Lord Sidmouth, in which I had given the same details as to your Lordship, and inclosed to him the mischievous number of Sherwin's Register, alluded to in my last.

That I deemed it my duty to make this communication to my Lord Sidmouth, I think I omitted to mention to your Lordship, which you will have the goodness to attribute to the hurry under which I was obliged to write my letters on Wednesday evening.

I am happy to say, the opinions I have formed, and the measures I have adopted, met the full approbation of my

brother Magistrates, as I hope they will of your Lordship.

I feel perfectly confident, with the military force which I shall have to-morrow at my disposal ; and I sincerely hope the strong attitude we have taken in this respect, without hitherto interfering with the proceedings of the reformers, will have due weight with them, and deter them from going to the dangerous lengths they have in Lancashire ; and which, I am quite satisfied, is the object of their leaders. *I am most anxious to avoid any contact with them, until they commit themselves by some breach of the peace, when I might be warranted in a decisive interference.*

I have a strong objection, which I think it right to name to your Lordship, to make use of the Yeomanry, except as an auxiliary force, and in case only of emergency. I perceive a strong hatred exists against this force, which is carefully cherished by all the reformers ; and if, unfortunately, we should require their services, the probability is, that in discharging their duty they would lay the foundation of perpetual heart-burnings and animosity.

I have not yet heard of any day being fixed for another meeting here ; there will be one at Wakefield on Monday next.

If any thing further occurs worth communicating to your Lordship, I shall take the liberty to write to you.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient

and most humble servant,

GEORGE BANKS.

Earl Fitzwilliam,

&c. &c.



(Copy.)

My Lord,

I AM just returned from the meeting, with Sir Francis Wood, Mr. Scott, and Mr. John Maude, amounting to about 2000, a great part were spectators.

Mr. Willan in the chair. The speakers were Messrs. Mitchell, Mason, Jackson, and another; all of whom, Sir Francis desires me to inform your Lordship, *talked a great deal of nonsense, but not Treason*; and the resolutions passed were similar to those at Manchester and other places. Supposing your Lordship would be anxious to hear the result, I send this by a special messenger. *All went off peaceably*. Nothing was required by the Act passed 31st March 1817, as it expired on the 24th July 1818; but I thought it proper to send to your Lordship a copy of the notice left at this office by these deluded people, who, *providentially*, are not aware of that circumstance.

I have the honour to remain,

Your Lordship's most humble servant,

JOHN FOLJAMBE.

Monday evening, 9 o'clock.

Edinburgh, September 15, 1819.

My Lord,

THE proceedings of the reformers at Manchester have been imitated at Paisley. *Though allowed, without molestation, to meet and to talk sedition*, they afterwards proceeded to violence, and continued their operations during the following day, although it was Sunday. Riots have also taken place in Glasgow. I have thought it right to communicate to your Lordship the whole information on the subject, of which I am possessed, and this you will find inclosed.

On the perusal of these documents, I think your Lordship will agree with me in opinion, *that the Magistrates*

*have acted with great prudence and moderation, and it now only remains for them to act with vigour if these proceedings are continued.—In haste,*

I have the honour to be

Your faithful servant,

W. RAE.

The Viscount Sidmouth,

&c. &c. &c.

*Paisley, Tuesday, 14th Sept. 11 o'clock.*

My Lord,

ON my return here yesterday, I found the town in great ferment. In the course of Sunday evening, the windows of a number of houses in all quarters of the town had been broken, particularly those of the clergy. The same thing was renewed on Monday, but with more system and deliberation. The plan chiefly adopted was to disperse on the appearance of constables, and to lurk in closes till an opportunity was found of sallying forth and throwing stones. As the cavalry could not pursue the rioters down the closes, we sent for infantry from Glasgow to guard the principal stations, and the cavalry dispersed any crowds which collected at the ends of streets ; but with instructions only to strike with the flat of the sabre. Military posts were stationed during the night at the chief outlets of streets, and preserved tranquility. The charges of the cavalry were executed with great moderation ; *and not till after printed notices that the Riot Act had been read were fixed on poles, and carried through the crowd.* (n) It is satisfactory that no person has been kil-

(n) It is remarkable, that in these documents there is no account whatever of the commencement of the Riots at Paisley, on the 11th September. Is it because the Magistrates there were so obviously the aggressors, that the narrative is suppressed ? I wish to ask those who have dared to assert, that all means were taken to inform the crowd on the 16th of August, that the Riot Act had been read, whe-

led ; nor, as far as I have heard, any one severely hurt. But if the scenes of yesterday be renewed to-day, I fear the moderation which has hitherto been observed cannot be continued.

Proposals were made to the Magistrates, by the ring-leaders of the mob, offering to restore tranquility, provided they gave up the flags, and liberated the prisoners, which I mention as indicative of the spirit by which the rioters are actuated.

*Paisley, 5 o'clock.*

Every thing is quiet up to this hour, at least apparently so ; but the streets are still more crowded than usual. I have been engaged chiefly this forenoon in taking the declarations of those we have apprehended. Our prisoners are very numerous, and our gaol here was nearly full before the riots. The Greenock gaol has received five, but will not hold more : and I beg leave to request, that the proper authority be immediately obtained by your Lordship, authorising the transmission of prisoners to Glasgow gaol, under the present emergency, and requiring the Magistrates of Glasgow to receive and detain them.

I am, my Lord,

Your obedient and humble servant,

JOHN DUNLOP.

*Glasgow, 14th September, 1819.*

My dear Lord,

FOR a very brief account of the proceedings here last night, I refer your Lordship to our Proclamation of this day, of which I send a copy by this night's post. The assemblage took place rather unexpectedly. After lamps

ther "printed notices" of that fact, "were fixed on poles and carried through the crowd." This is so obvious an expedient, that its not having been done, cannot be attributed to oversight.

and windows had been broken we read the Riot Act; and then authorized the dragoons to clear the streets with their sabres, having previously been assailed with volleys of stones from a house at present rebuilding in an adjoining street. The soldiers, as usual, behaved with great moderation. About a hundred prisoners were made; but we discharged upwards of fifty of them before two o'clock, A. M.; and I fear we shall only be able to procure evidence against a few of those we have still in custody, amounting to about thirty. This check has not been sufficient. They are rather elated, it seems, than otherwise, by the success of their diversion in favour of Paisley; and, if we may rely upon the accounts we have received from different quarters, we shall have the same scene again to-night, for which we have made the necessary preparations.

I am, my dear Lord,

Respectfully and faithfully yours,

JAMES REDDIE.

The Lord Advocate of Scotland.

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*Wentworth, 25th September, 1819.*

My Lord,

I must apologize to your Lordship for an apparent tardiness in forwarding the report made to me by the Mayor of Leeds, respecting the occurrences of Monday last, within his jurisdiction; but when it reached this place I was absent.

I have now the honour of transmitting a copy of his letter. *I am confident your Lordship will learn with the greatest satisfaction, that it passed off without the slightest interruption of the public peace:* notwithstanding the occasion had drawn together, in Leeds, such an immense assemblage of people, as had never before been seen in Leeds, who marched in solemn procession to Hunslet



Moor ; the inflammatory speeches of the orators had not attraction to retain them together ; they dropped off by degrees, and at the conclusion of the business, not more than had been usually seen at ordinary meetings continued to attend.

I am no less confident that your Lordship will applaud the judicious conduct pursued by the Mayor, and likewise the precautionary arrangements which he had made, in case of necessity.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

&c. &c. &c.

WENTWORTH FITZWILLIAM.

Viscount Sidmouth,

&c. &c. &c.

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(Copy.)

*Leeds, 20th Sept. 1819.*

My Lord,

IT may be satisfactory to your Lordship, to receive from me some account, though short and imperfect, of this day's meeting on Hunslet Moor.

About eleven o'clock there was an evident movement in the streets, and numerous arrivals in small parties of people from the country ; these continued increasing very much till about one o'clock, when the large detachments from the adjoining townships, and also a very numerous one from Dewsbury, headed by Willan, having arrived, the procession moved on to Hunslet Moor, where it arrived about three o'clock, accompanied by a band of music, and a great variety of flags, with various mottos ; the particulars of which I am not yet acquainted with.

A man of the name of Chapman took the chair ; some violent speeches were delivered : a number of resolutions past, such I understand as we have witnessed in Lancashire, and a collection made on the spot, under the pretence of applying the produce to enable Hunt to sustain the prosecutions in process against him.

The crowd which first appeared on Hunslet Moor, must have infinitely surpassed any thing of the kind which was ever before known in this place ; but, being composed of the idle and curious, as well as the mischievous, the former not finding attractions for them, they began, together with the women and children, early to retire ; and before the business of the meeting was dispatched, the numbers were reduced so low, as at the last meeting, not exceeding 4 or 5,000 ; although I cannot doubt, there must have been at one period, perhaps about four o'clock, little short of 20,000 souls present—*the whole affair has terminated peaceably.*

The only measures of precaution I adopted, with the approbation of my brother Magistrates, were these. I ordered the regular constables of the town, under their chief, to assemble at the Court House ; as also the watch and patrol, under their captain, at five o'clock, where I attended, with the Recorder, and a few other Magistrates, *until a little after eight, by which time the whole affair was over, and all the parties appeared to have quietly dispersed.*

With regard to the military, I desired the commandant of the squadron of dragoons to give strict orders to all his men to keep close in their quarters, holding themselves and their horses in perfect readiness, in a moment's notice ; *and as my object was to avoid display, I did not give out any orders till the assemblage had quitted the town.*

After leaving the Court House, I had an engagement with the Committee at the Workhouse, which has detain-

ed me so late, that I fear my letter will scarcely be in time for the post.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient

And most humble servant,

(Signed)

GEORGE BANKS.

To Earl Fitzwilliam,

&c. &c. &c.

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*Halifax, October 5, 1819.*

Sir,

I AM glad to say there was no further disturbance here yesterday, after the meeting had dispersed, except that three or four of the alehouses were full of persons drinking late in the evening: whereas they had been ordered to close them at eight o'clock; and the constables had great difficulty in clearing them, which could only be done by force; *the people shewing the worst possible spirit.* The heavy rain fell most fortunately, as it drove home those who came from the country; otherwise I have little doubt the constables would have been overpowered.

Every report I receive justifies me in declaring, that more than fifty thousand persons were assembled, *and that most of them had something on which they relied more than their sticks, some of which were actually shouldered, being rather clubs than sticks.*

There could not be more than a few thousands on the Moor from the town itself; crowds came in every direction, and this place seems to have been well selected, being destitute of defence.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

THOMAS HORTON.

To H. Hobhouse, Esq.

&c. &c.

Gateshead, 13th October, 1819.

My Lord,

WE have the honour to acquaint your Lordship, that we have addressed a letter this morning to the Lord Lieutenant of the County, respecting the present state of Chester ward, in the county of Durham, of which we desire to forward a copy to you.

We have the honour to be,

Your Lordship's humble servants,

ADAM ASKEW, Chairman.

H. G. LIDDELL.

ROBERT SHAW.

G. T. LEATON.

CHA. THORP.

J. COLLINSON.

To Lord Sidmouth.

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*Copy of the Letter sent to the Lord Lieutenant.*

My Lord,

WE, the Magistrates of Chester Ward, assembled at a general meeting, feel it to be our duty to represent to your Lordship, that from the proceedings upon the river Tyne, and the general state of the ward, we are unable to answer for the preservation of the public peace, or the security of the inhabitants, without an increase of the military force.

We should be glad to have the yeomanry force of the ward put into activity; and trust that your Lordship will adopt such measures as you may think requisite upon the present emergency.

(Signed)

ADAM ASKEW, Chairman.

H. G. LIDDELL.

ROB. SHAW.

THO. BAKER.

GEO. THO. LEATON.

J. COLLINSON.

CHA. THORPE.



*Raby Castle, October 15, 1819.*

My Lord,

I BEG leave to inform your Lordship, that in consequence of an urgent requisition from the Magistrates in the North district of this county, and from the Mayor of Newcastle, who has stated to me, that he had been attacked in the execution of his duty, I have judged it expedient to order out the South Tyne Yeomanry Cavalry, and to place them under the authority of the Magistrates, *who must be responsible if they order the military to act, and I have urged them strongly not to do so, unless the civil power is overcome, or incompetent.* I cannot help observing, that the refractory keelmen, *and the radical reformers, are, I trust, perfectly separate,* although very inflammatory language and seditious writings are diffused amongst the former, who formed, I suppose, a part of that large assemblage of people, who met on Newcastle Moor, on Monday, but who appear *to have quietly dispersed.*

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

Very obedient and humble servant,

DARLINGTON, Lord Lieutenant.

To Viscount Sidmouth.

*Westleigh, October 17, 1819.*

My Lord,

CONCEIVING it my duty, I have the honour to inclose to your Lordship, several copies of informations on oath, accompanied by a petition, signed by most of the respectable inhabitants of the town of Leigh, in which I perfectly coincide; and have good reason to believe, that without the protection of the military, neither their persons nor their property will be safe much longer.

*The acerbation of temper amongst the weavers, or, as they stile themselves, the reformers, produced by severe privations, from the lowness of wages, and infuriated by seditious publications and cheap pamphlets, industriously circulated amongst them, has prepared them for the perpetration of the most atrocious crimes, and they openly declare their intention, by a simultaneous movement in the night, to seize property wherever they can find it, and destroy the possessors thereof; and it is added, that the period is not far distant. (o)*

I beg leave to state, that a single troop of horse would, in my humble opinion, be adequate to the purpose, provided it was stationary for a few months; as it would enable us to put the Watch and Ward Act in force, which, in the present state of things, I do not deem practicable.

I have the honour to be,  
My Lord,  
Your Lordship's most obedient servant,  
R. MARSH.

To Lord Sidmouth.

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<i>County Palatine of Lancaster to wit.</i>	}	The information of P. Q. taken upon oath, before me, Richard Marsh, Esq. one of His Majesty's Justices
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(o) We have here another instance of the levity and want of consideration with which the poor are charged with the most atrocious projects. The "open declarations" here stated, are overt acts of treason, and it is impossible to presume, that any magistrate would be guilty of such a dereliction of duty, as to suffer persons, by whom these monstrous crimes were avowedly contemplated, to continue at large. It must be, that Mr. Marsh had *no grounds to warrant the apprehension of any individual*. Consequently, he could have none to justify a general and indiscriminate accusation. The four affidavits, which follow Mr. Marsh's letter, are of a very equivocal description, particularly that of the "*Informant, who pretended to fall asleep*." That is an old trick. It was practised by the respectable Mr. Castles, with respect to Hunt and Watson. It was also in vogue during the Irish rebellion.

of the Peace, in and for the said county, the 14th day of October, in the year of our Lord, 1819.

Who saith, that about a fortnight ago, he received orders from several persons, to make about twenty pikes, but this informant did not make them, *nor does he know the persons who ordered them.* That this informant believes he could have had orders for one hundred pikes, if he had chosen to accept the order.

(Signed by)

P. Q.

Sworn at Westleigh, in the said County, the day and year above written, before me,

(Signed by) R. MARSH.

*County Palatine of Lancaster, to wit.* } The information of Q. R. taken upon oath before me, Richard Marsh, Esq. one of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace, in and for the said county, the 14th day of October, in the year of our Lord, 1819.

Who saith, that of late, about one hundred persons have mentioned, distantly, to this informant, as to his willingness to make pikes, but he hath uniformly refused; that about forty persons have applied directly, and in person, to this informant, to make pikes for them, but that he hath refused every application; but this informant cannot take upon him to swear to his knowledge of the persons so applying, except \* \* \* \*

(Signed by)

Q. R.

Sworn at Westleigh, in the said County, the day and year aforesaid, before me,

(Signed by)

R. MARSH.

County Palatine  
of Lancaster,  
to wit.

} The information of R. S. taken upon oath before me, Richard Marsh, Esq. one of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace, in and for the said County, the seventeenth day of October, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and nineteen.

Who saith, that some persons, about a week ago, called at this informant's house, who are of the class called Reformers; that as they were *speaking seditiously this informant pretended to fall asleep*, when he heard the said persons say, *that it was the intention to rise in the night, upon the 1st day of November next, and that it was to be done all through the country, and they would divide the property amongst them.* That two other persons have said, in this informant's house, that the blacksmith at Pickley Green, in Westleigh, in the said county, was busy making pikes, and had hired a man to file them. That this informant did not know the said persons, but from their language he *understood, that the pikes were to be used to kill the gentlemen, and to take their property.*

(Signed by)

R. S.

Sworn before me, at Hindley  
aforesaid,

(Signed by)

R. MARSH.

County Palatine  
of Lancaster,  
to wit.

} The information of S. T. taken upon oath, before me, Richard Marsh, Esq. one of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace, in and for the said county, the 14th day of October, in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Nineteen.

Who saith, That he has made various iron instruments, similar to the one he now produces, by order of different



persons, but does not know their use ; he has made about sixteen or eighteen, and has orders for twenty more for the Bedford side, to be ready by Saturday the 16th instant : believes he could have orders for one thousand if he could make them ; they are made by order, with points and keyholes, to fasten into a staff, and the pattern and material is usually brought by the person ordering them. He has made one for \_\_\_\_\_, and one for \_\_\_\_\_ ; but does not know the names of any others. He was not aware that they were unlawful weapons, but has lately been told that they are. *That this informant has no objection for any person to stand in his shop to see him make them, or to see who calls for them.*

Sworn at Westleigh aforesaid, the day } Signed with the  
and year above written, before me } Mark of S. T.  
(Signed by) R. MARSH.

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Newcastle, October 17, 1819.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's favour of the 15th ; it is impossible to contemplate the meeting of the 11th without awe ; more especially if my information is correct, that 700 of them were prepared with arms (concealed) to resist the Civil Power. These men came from a village about three miles from this town, *and there is strong reason to suspect that arms are manufactured there* : they are chiefly forgers. I have given all the information that I have received to the Magistrates for the county of Durham, it being within their jurisdiction.

I had desired the Town Clerk to write the particulars of the riot at Shields by last post, being so entirely engaged in the discharge of my official duties, that I had not a moment to do so myself—I am truly sorry to learn that he had not written.

The Keelmen having on Tuesday morning last stopped the waggons and proceeded to other acts of insubordination, it was determined, that the Magistrates for Northumberland and Durham, accompanied by dragoons, should go down on the North and South sides of the river, and that I should go on the river. Four boats from His Majesty's ships met me about three miles from Shields. We effected all we wished: the ships loaded at the spouts, and I protected four keels to Shields: they moored to the ships; the owners said they only required some Constables left to protect them, and dismissed His Majesty's boats; and having discharged my duty, I went on shore, leaving the steam packet and Constables to protect the crews of the keels. There did not appear the least reason to suspect riot, or an attack upon the packet. I had not been twenty minutes on shore, where I had ordered some refreshment for myself, when I received a message from the packet to send them immediate assistance, as their lives were in imminent danger. I sent to Captain Montague requesting his boats, and made an immediate attempt to get to the packet: I found it absolutely impossible, without sacrificing my life to no purpose. Between three and four hundred of the mob were upon the quay, showering stones into the packet. In the course of a few minutes, I was informed His Majesty's boats were arrived; I made another attempt to get on board—it was impossible. At this time I marked one man, who appeared a leader; he threw stones, and as he retreated to seek more stones, and was stooping for that purpose, I seized him, and with the aid of another gentleman, took him prisoner: he is a shoemaker, has seven men employed under him, and was one of the Radicals who marched from Shields on the 11th. Within a few minutes I heard the report of two muskets and went out to know the cause, and was informed that they were fired from the shore; this was not the case; they were fired by marines, in the air: very soon two or three

more were fired, and I heard a cry of murder; one man was killed. The mob immediately turned their fury to me, saying, I had ordered the firing. The room in which I was, was attacked with stones and brick bats; in a minute the glass sashes were demolished: the house, a very large one, belonging to the Duke of Northumberland, was surrounded; the windows demolished. I had at the beginning sent for two Magistrates at Shields; they could not come, and at this critical moment, when the mob broke open the door, and were rushing in to take me, the High Constable, Mr. Joshua Donkin, arrived, and assuring them that it was impossible that I could give the order, they became more quiet. I had previously gone to the door to make the same assurance, but was assaulted with a volley of stones, two of which took effect. They then demanded the prisoner: as he was well known, he was released, and hopes were entertained that they were satisfied. In three or four minutes the attack was renewed in front of the house; Mr. Donkin and myself went out at the back door at the moment the mob rushed into the front; we were not recognized, and got off: they searched every room, even chests for me. The Inquest is sitting: there is no doubt of a verdict of justifiable homicide. I am happy to say I have reason to believe the business between the Keelmen and Owners will be settled to-morrow; but, this will not render us secure, *the reformers are now in a state of almost rebellion*. I applied to Lord Darlington—the yeomanry are all under arms; four companies of the 40th marched here at four o'clock on Friday morning, and more come to-morrow. Post is going.

I am,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's obedient servant,

A. REED, Mayor.

Lord Viscount Sidmouth,

&c. &c. &c.

Manchester, October 21, 1819.

My Lord,

*FROM every quarter the universal information and opinion is, that the people are in a great measure armed, and are continually, and as quickly as possible, and as extensively arming.*

It is strongly surmised that pikes have been, and are, sent from Birmingham in boxes, and I have put this matter in a train of investigation.

*I fear, also, my Lord, it is but too true that many hundreds of small-priced pistols have been sold in this town within a very short period, and that the lower classes are purchasing them in great numbers. (p)*

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's faithful humble servant,

J. NORRIS.

Lord Viscount Sidmouth,

&c. &c. &c.

Lancashire } The Examination of T. U. taken upon Oath  
to wit. } before me, the Reverend Thomas Dunham  
Whitaker, Clerk, Doctor of Laws, one of  
His Majesty's Justices of the Peace in and  
for the said county, this eleventh day of  
October, 1819.

This afternoon about four o'clock, I went into the smithy of Ralph Miller, in Mellor, in the said county,

(p) Mr. Norris surely can feel no surprise at the facts he enumerates in this letter. Up to this period Englishmen have lived *unarmed*, (notwithstanding their unquestionable constitutional right to carry arms for self-defence) because they were confident that their lives and liberty were under the protection of the law. But when one class of the population is armed avowedly in opposition to another,—above all, when a part of that armed class have at the point of the sword dispersed a meeting peaceably, and which, at least, *supposed* itself *legally* assembled, maiming, cutting, and tramp-



to inquire after my son-in-law, who has run away from his master, who is a blacksmith. I found Ralph Miller and a young man at work at the forge; there were in the smithy about five or six other men, who appeared to be weavers; they were sitting, and seemed to be watching the smith's work. I inquired from Ralph Miller, whether he had seen any person answering the description of my son-in law, whom I described? he said, he had not; one of the weavers said to me, he (meaning my son-in-law) is making pikes like these; at the same time this person took up an unfinished pike from the ground under the bellows, and shewed it to me; (I had before stated that my son-in law's master was a blacksmith.) Ralph Miller turned his head towards the man who had taken up the pikes, and smiled. I then inquired of Ralph Miller, if he could make me heels to my shoes? he said he could not, he was too busy. One of the weavers said, he (Ralph Miller) was too busy making pikes; another of the weavers asked me, if there were any pikes in our neighbourhood? I said I had not seen any, but I had heard that there were a good many coming to the Bolton meeting next Wednesday from Haslingden; one of the weavers answered, we know that. One of the weavers then asked me, if they would come with their pikes? I said, I had heard so; another of the weavers said, "and we will too." One of the weavers then took up another pike, which was nearly finished; I inquired the price of it; one of the weavers said it was a shilling; a young man dressed like a weaver, who was using the large hammer for the young smith, said it was fourteen pence. I asked the young man who was dressed like a weaver, to sell it to me; but he said, I could not

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ling upon hundreds of the individuals, who composed it; and legal redress has been sought for in vain; that the people should think it necessary to provide themselves with the means of defence, cannot be surprising, however much it may be to be explored. And let it never be forgotten, that we have no authentic proofs of the providing of arms by the people, until after the 16th of August.

have one then, as they had none finished. I was in the smithy about an hour and a half, during which I had a good deal of conversation with the weavers and the two smiths, in the course of which one of the weavers said, there was no way for them but rising altogether. One of the weavers asked me, if I thought there would be any thing to do at Bolton, at the reform meeting next Wednesday? I said I could not tell, but that people were afraid there would be. Another of the weavers said, there would be bloody work ; *another said, they would not be, as they were at Manchester, unarmed ; that they had a right to go to the meeting armed.* The old man, Ralph Miller, was present during the whole of this conversation ; he appeared to be rather deaf, and was busy at work during the greater part of the time, but he must have heard the whole, or a part of the conversation.

T. U.

Taken before me, T. D. Whitaker.

*Lancashire* } Examinations of Witnesses taken upon oath  
*to wit.* } before me, the Reverend Thomas Dunham  
 Whitaker, Clerk, Doctor of Laws, one of  
 His Majesty's Justices of the peace in and  
 for the said county, this twelfth day of Oc-  
 tober, 1819.

U. V. in the county of Lancaster, deposes as follows : This forenoon, about half-past ten o'clock, in consequence of a request from \* \* \*, one of the constables of Blackburn, I went into Mellor, which is about four miles from Blackburn, in company with V. X. to purchase a pike from Ralph Miller, of Mellor aforesaid, blacksmith. In passing Ralph Miller's smithy, we saw a number of persons standing there, and, not knowing how they were disposed, we went forward to a public-house in Mellor, known by the sign of the Millstone, and called for two glasses of ale. I then sent V. X. to the smithy, to request

Ralph Miller to come down to me, and to tell him that a person wanted to speak with him. In about a quarter-of-an-hour or twenty minutes, V. X. and Miller came into the public-house together, and sat down in the room in which I was; no other person was in the room. I told Miller I did not like to call at the smithy, as we saw some men about; Miller said, you need not have minded that, for they are come about pikes. After Miller had been seated a few minutes, V. X. informed me, that he had mentioned the business to Miller. I then produced to Miller a small pistol, and asked him, if he could put me a screw in which was wanting? Miller took the pistol into his hand, and examined it, and asked me what a pair of pistols such as that might cost? I told him, perhaps a guinea. I then asked him if he had any of the other articles? (by which I meant the pikes). He said he had some, but they were not ground up yet. I then asked him, how soon he could settle us up two? he said, about two hours; I then asked him the length of them? Miller then took up a tobacco-pipe, and shewed me the length, which appeared to be about fourteen inches. I then asked him the form which they were in? he said, he thought they were straight, and very sharp at the point, and well steeled at the small end, and made with a shank to fit into the staff, and that in that shank there was a hole to put a nail through to make it fast. I then asked him, if there were not pikes made with a hook? he said, he had made one, and the hook screwed in near the lower end, and the hook was flat and sharp, but they were not well liked, as the cavalry horses now had chains in the bridles, to prevent them from being cut, and the pike he had made in the form which he was describing, he had disposed of to a person in Blackburn, who put out pieces in Mellor for some manufacturer in Preston, and he believed that he had sent it to London, it was such a handsome one; that he had given him two shillings and ten pence for it. I then

asked Miller what purpose they were to be appropriated to ? he said, they were to charge against the cavalry. He said, he had made some hundreds of pikes, and a great many had gone into Harwood, principally to Harwood and Rishton, and all that he had by him made at present were eight, and he thought he should make no more, as he was afraid of being apprehended by the Justices' orders, but he did not see where they could have any hold of him ; I answered, I did not know whether they had or not, but I desired him to take another glass of ale, and get these ground up for us, as we could wish to be off. In consequence of that, Miller went away ; I waited near two hours at the public-house, during which I sent V. X. twice to get Miller to make haste with the pikes. At the end of the two hours I went up to the smithy : I saw two lads turning a grindstone at the back of the smithy, and two men holding on two pikes, to polish or sharpen them. V. X. brought one of the pikes into the smithy, and gave it to me into my hand. I asked him if it was finished ? the old man said, no, not yet ; I gave it to him into his hand ; he just rubbed up the edges with a file, and said it wanted whetting upon a stone ; I told him never to mind that, we could do that when we wanted to use it. V. X. then went out and fetched the other pike, which he delivered to Miller, who rubbed up the edge of the pike with a file, and then went out of the smithy for a sheet of paper, which he wrapped round each pike separately, and delivered one to me, and the other to V. X. I paid him fourteen pence a-piece for them, and two pence for two hoops. I inquired of Ralph Miller, if it was likely that many persons would go out of that neighbourhood to the Bolton meeting ? he said he thought a great many would go off that side. We then came away. The pikes now produced are those which I so purchased from Miller.

U. V.

Taken before me, T. D. Whitaker.



V. X. being sworn at the same time, deposeth as follows ; I came from Burnley this morning, with T. U. and went with him into Mellor. We called at the Millstone. T. U. sent me up to Ralph Miller's to get him to come down to the public-house. I met Ralph Miller between the smithy and his own house ; I asked him to come down ; he said, What is your business ? I told him that another gentleman at the public-house wanted to speak to him about some pikes ; I told him there was a meeting at Bolton, and we meant to go. Ralph Miller then took me into his smithy, and shewed me some pikes ; I do not know how many there were ; they were under the bellows in the smithy, covered with ashes. I told Miller that the gentleman at the public-house had a pistol which he wanted settling ; Miller then went with me to the public-house. He sat about ten minutes in company with T. U. and myself. T. U. produced a pistol to Miller, and asked him if he could put him a screw in it ? Miller looked at it a considerable bit, and asked T. U. what would be the value of a pair ? to which T. U. said, about a guinea. Then T. U. asked Miller if he had any pikes ? Miller said, he had some by him, but they were not finished ; T. U. asked him, how soon he could finish two ? Miller answered, perhaps in two hours. Miller said, he had made a pike with a hook for a man who put out goods, and it had been sent to London, for any thing he knew, but that the other pikes were more liked, because the cavalry now had chains to their bridles. T. U. asked Miller what was meant to be done with these pikes ? Miller answered, that they were to charge the cavalry with. There was other conversation between Miller and T. U. Miller went away to finish two pikes for us. When he had been gone away a few minutes, T. U. sent me up to the smithy to ask if the pikes were ready. As soon as I went into the smithy, the old man, Ralph Miller, ordered a young man, who appeared to be a smith, to take two pikes, and grind

them directly ; the young man took two pikes from under the bellows. I and another man went with the young smith to the grindstone behind the smithy ; the young blacksmith and another man held each one pike upon the stone, and two men turned the stone ; one of the bystanders asked me who my companion was ? I said I did not know. They asked me, if he was a speaker ? I told them, I did not know. They then asked me, where we were going to ? I said, I did not know whether Bolton or not. They told me, that a person who had been speaking in Yorkshire was missing, and they wished to know if this was he. They then wished me to go to a white house, where money was gathered for the support of speakers ; they shewed me the house, which was about three hundred yards off, and told me they paid one penny a week there ; I told them I durst not take any money, without acquainting my master. I then went down to T. U. to ask him if I must take any money ? he said I must not, and I went back and told them so. I then went into Miller's smithy, and remained there till T. U. came up. T. U. went into the smithy, and I followed him. I then fetched a pike from the young smith, and took it into the smithy, and gave it to T. U. who asked Ralph Miller if it was finished ? Miller said it was not, and he took it and filed it, and said it wanted whetting. T. U. said it would do, he could whet it up when he wanted it. I then went and fetched the other ; Ralph Miller filed it up. T. U. asked him the price, which Ralph Miller said was fourteen-pence a-piece, and two-pence for the hoops ; we paid him that price for them. The old man wrapped up the pikes in paper, and gave one to me, and another to T. U. and we then came away. The two pikes now produced are those which we so received from Ralph Miller. V. X.

Taken before me, T. D. Whitaker.

*Lancashire to wit.*

Examinations of Witnesses taken upon Oath before me, the Reverend Thomas Dunham Whitaker, Clerk, Doctor of Laws, one of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace in and for the said county, this thirteenth day of October, 1819—against James Morris and John Knowles.

X. Y. deposeth as follows; Yesterday about eight o'clock in the morning, I went with Y. Z. to the house of the prisoner James Morris, in Haslingden Grain. We got there about eleven o'clock in the forenoon; we found Morris at work in his smithy; he was mending some tools. I asked him if he had any winding-machines by him? he said he had none finished off. I then asked him if he could have one ready by next Sunday week? he said, yes. James Morris then asked the prisoner if he was for Bolton? he answered, yes, they could not do without him. Morris, the prisoner, then pulled out a pike-head from under a quantity of turf in the smithy, and said, there is the winding-machine you want, I suppose? I said, yes, that is the tool itself. He then pulled out two other pike-heads from the same place, and asked if those articles would do, and if we would grind them down ourselves? We then asked him the price of two of the pikes? he answered, three shillings, he could take no less. We purchased two pikes for three shillings. The prisoner Morris then looked at me, and said to Y. Z. that man has plenty of money, I answered, yes, I have a note. The prisoner then said, get shut of it as soon as you can, for it will be of no use to-morrow after Bolton meeting. He then asked me if I should be there? *In the course of the conversation with the prisoner, he said, it is of no use to go to Bolton meeting, without they took these tools with them to defend themselves; and referred to the Manchester meeting, which he called Peterloo.* The pikes now produced are those which we purchased as is above stated.

Y. Z. and I then proceeded to John Knowles, of Rawtenstall. About three or four o'clock in the afternoon we called at the Wheatsheaf, which is a door or two from Knowles's smithy. In passing the smithy on the way to the Wheatsheaf, I saw Knowles at work upon the steady, hammering a pike. I sent the landlady for Knowles; he came in a few minutes. We gave him something to drink. Y. Z. asked him if he had any pikes? he said he had four, but they were not quite finished off. Knowles then went out of the house, and in about five minutes came back with a short man: the short man (whose name I do not know) brought with him several pikes, covered up in a wrapper. Knowles then sat down, and drank Hunt and Liberty, *and* REVENGE TO PETERLOO MEETING. Another man came into the room, and produced a pike from under his coat, and said to me, this pike I have just got made for my son. Y. Z. took up the last mentioned pike, and asked the price? Knowles said it was three shillings and sixpence. I asked Knowles if he had made it himself? he said he had, he had made many a score. He then asked me where I came from? I said, from Accrington. Knowles said there were many had gone into that quarter. We then bought two pikes, one of which cost two shillings and four-pence, and the other two shillings. I then inquired of the landlord what the shot was? he said, nine pence. I said, I had but seven pence halfpenny: Knowles said, I will give you three halfpence, reformers are not within three halfpence one to another. I then asked Knowles if we could go no way private; Knowles shewed me the way to the back door; we came that way, and brought the pikes with us: they are the pikes now produced.

#### X. Y.

Y. Z. deposeth as follows: I have heard the preceding examination of X. Y. read, and the same is true in every particular. The pikes now produced are those which



were purchased from the two prisoners as is above stated.

Y. Z.

Taken before me, T. D. Whitaker.

U. V. deposes as follows : this morning at two o'clock I set out from Blackburn in company with \* \* \*, a detachment of cavalry, and others, for the purpose of apprehending James Morris of Haslingden Grain, and John Knowles of Rawtenstall. We reached the prisoner Morris's house at a little past three o'clock in the morning ; we got admittance into the house and apprehended the prisoner, and then proceeded to search the house. \* \* \* and I and some of the soldiers went up stairs ; I found in a room up stairs a pike head concealed under a lathe among the turnings ; \* \* \* then took a candle, and found two pistol stocks concealed upon a shelf near the roof ; one of the stocks had a barrel let into it ; in another room, \* \* \* and I found a box which was locked ; we called out for a key ; one of Morris's sons, a lad of about 15 or 16 years of age, said the key was lost ; I then attempted to break open the box ; the lad then said to us, will you break it open ? I told him we would if he did not produce the key ; the lad then produced a key from his breeches pocket and delivered it to \* \* \* ; \* \* \* opened the box, and in it we found about four pounds weight of leaden balls in an unfinished state. I afterwards found two poles, each about five feet long, put up a chimney in the same room, which appeared to have been intended for pike shafts : we then reached the smithy and out-buildings, and found in the smithy, close to the anvil, a piece of iron beaten, which appears to have been intended for a pike head. We then sent the prisoner off to Blackburn, under the care of \* \* \*, and \* \* \*, to whom we delivered the articles found as above stated. The articles now produced are those which were found.

\* \* \* and I and a party of soldiers then proceeded to

Rawtenstall, to the house of the prisoner John Knowles : it was about five o'clock when we reached his house ; Knowles was in bed ; \* \* \* called to him to get up ; Knowles inquired who wanted him ? \* \* \* answered, it was an old friend ; Knowles called out, what are you for, Bolton ? \* \* \* said yes ; Knowles then came down stairs, partly dressed, and opened the door and was immediately apprehended : \* \* \* accompanied him up stairs whilst Knowles dressed himself. I proceeded to search Knowles's smithy, and in a cupboard in the wall I found the socket of a pike head and a small pistol ; I found upon a bench near the cupboard a small box, containing the papers now produced, and which I have marked. One of the papers contains the letters " Hunt and Liberty," written in roman letters with a pen ; another, the pattern of a pike ; another is entitled at the top, " Rawtenstall Section, No. 1," and it is ruled in square columns and contains several numbers : and another purports to be an epitaph on the constitution. We brought Knowles off, and I kept the articles which were found, as above stated, and they are those which are now produced. In our journey back to Blackburn I rode with the prisoner in a chaise ; I had some conversation with him ; I asked him if he had sold any pikes within this week or fortnight ; *he said he had not ; but he said he had made several, and would make for any body who came to order them ; he was only working for wages, and work was scarce ;* I then shewed him the pike which I had found upon his premises, and asked him if he had made any of that pattern ; he put one finger up the socket and said he had made that pike, but on examining it a second time he said he had not made it ; it was a very clumsy, rough thing, it had been sent to him as a pattern : it began to rain, and I observed that I thought it would prevent many people from going to the Bolton meeting ; he said he thought not, for they did not much mind being wet.

U. V.

Taken before me, T. D. Whitaker.

\* \* \* deposes as follows ; I have heard the preceding examinations of U. V. relative to the two prisoners, read : so much of it as relates to me is true : during the time when I was with the prisoner Knowles up stairs, and while he was dressing, one of the soldiers said to Knowles, you are a clever fellow, you understand making pikes very well : Knowles answered he could make a pike as well as any man in England. (q) .

\* \* \*

Taken before me, T. D. Whitaker.

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*Hamilton Palace, November 6, 1819.*

My Lord,

I HAVE to acknowledge your Lordship's two letters of the 1st. and 2d. of November, upon the subject of the Yeomanry Cavalry, and will endeavour to give every effect to the same ; your Lordship holding always in view, what I before said of the great difficulty attending it. To the natural difficulty, attached to the situation of the farmer, &c. &c. in this country, there appears now a

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(q) These four affidavits, like those with respect to drilling, prove the publicity with which what is now represented as an unlawful pursuit, was carried on. T. U. speaks of about five or six other persons being present, whilst the pikes were made. U. V. saw a number of persons standing near Miller's smithy. X. Y. and Y. Z. depose that Morris said, "It is of no use to go to the Bolton Meeting, without they "took these tools with them to *defend themselves*, and referred to the Manchester "Meeting which he called Peterloo." They also state, that Knowles drank "*Revenge to Peterloo Meeting*." U. V. deposes, that when Knowles was apprehended, he said he had made several pikes, "*and would make for any body who came to order them*. He was only working for wages, and work was scarce." I am therefore fully borne out in my assertion, that the making of pikes was not by these persons considered to be illegal. Nor in itself, is it so. It is only when they can be proved to the satisfaction of a Jury, to have been made in contemplation of an unlawful purpose, that the making of them becomes an offence. But it is also important to remark, that the circumstances which occurred at Manchester on the 16th, are *constantly* referred to, as the inducement to procure arms for self-defence. The Magistrates, therefore, are the persons to whom all the blame of the degree of arming, which there has been since that period, ought to attach.

novel one, proceeding from the alarm excited by those who compose the various and numerous meetings in this district of country. In regard to the general state of affairs, your Lordship has other sources of information, perhaps better than mine; but were I to venture to offer an opinion of my own, I should say, *that the state of men's minds is such, at this moment, that the most trifling irritation would lead to disturbance*; and should any violence commence, there are no means, nor should I be able to counteract it.

As the meeting of Parliament will occasion my absence from the country, ere long, I must repeat to your Lordship, *that this neighbourhood continues in a state of extreme distress—generally in want of employment, and under a considerable degree of agitation; all of which appear more likely to increase than diminish*. If therefore your Lordship should have any particular communication to make to me, or any directions to give connected with the public service in this country, I am anxious to receive the same, before my approaching departure, which will probably take place in about eight or ten days.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient

and most humble Servant,

HAMILTON & BRANDON.

The Viscount Sidmouth,

&c. &c. &c.

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*Hamilton Palace, Nov. 7, 1819.*

My Lord,

I YESTERDAY communicated to the Lord Advocate, to be laid before Sir Thomas Bradford, a letter that I had just received from a very respectable Magistrate.



He states that in his neighbourhood, the farmers, &c. &c. who were required to act as constables or volunteers, although well-disposed so to do, did not dare to come forward on account of the menaces of their neighbours. I have again this day received a report, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy. Your Lordship will see that the alarm which prevails in their district precludes those gentlemen likewise from being able to procure signatures from the very persons who they are persuaded are disposed to sign.

This part of the country is unfortunately surrounded by idle Irishmen, Weavers, and Colliers, who create a general uneasiness; and if any means are to be carried into effect to separate the good from the bad, or to maintain order and public justice, it is requisite that the civil power, and the peaceable part of the population, should know how and where to find support and protection. I must recommend to your Lordship's serious consideration the above important statement.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's obedient humble Servant,

HAMILTON & BRANDON.

To the Lord Viscount Sidmouth,

&c. &c. &c.

*Parish of Old Monkland, 7th Nov. 1819.*

My Lord Duke,

WE, the subscribers, the deputation from the committee of Old and New Monkland, for obtaining subscriptions to a declaration of loyalty, as well as for volunteer cavalry and infantry, beg leave to lay before your Grace, as Lord Lieutenant of the county of Lanark, the following statement with regard to these two parishes with which we are connected: *that it is impossible to obtain a subscription*

*to the declaration of loyalty with effect, or to obtain signatures for forming either volunteer corps of infantry or cavalry in the present disturbed state of the district, however anxious the loyal and well-disposed part of his Majesty's subjects therein are, because of the apprehension they entertain from the ill-disposed and turbulent people with which they are surrounded : we, the subscribers, therefore wish to represent the absolute necessity of having a rallying point, which we consider alone can be effective, by having a military force stationed at Airdrie, as the only proper place of rendezvous for that purpose : we therefore hope your Grace will take the earliest opportunity of representing our statement to the Secretary of State.*

We have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Grace's most obedient and humble Servants,

(Signed) DAVID BUCHANAN, Dep. Lt.

CHARLES PIE, Major Gen.

JAMES TENNENT.

His Grace the Duke of Hamilton,

&c. &c. &c.

Lord Lieutenant of the county of Lanark.

*Hawkhead, November 9th, 1819.*

My Lord,

ON my arrival in this county, I found that the tone of feeling and proceedings of the vast manufacturing population of this neighbourhood, were of a description calculated to excite the utmost alarm in the well-affected, and that the public mind was considerably agitated by the insidious and too successful promulgation of seditious principles, as well as by the late more open, audacious attempts, to interrupt the public tranquillity.

*In this populous manufacturing district, revolutionary principles have made alarming progress. For a consider-*

able period, the utmost pains have been taken to spread a spirit of disaffection in this county, by an unexampl'd spirit of proselytism, to perpetuate the evil, by instilling the most pernicious principles in the minds of youth, *and to obliterate all religious feeling in this once religious district.*

The statutes for repressing seditious clubs and societies, have induced the disaffected to conduct all their proceedings by committees, which are appointed at smaller meetings, to manage the preparations for the larger; and a system of rapid communication of political intelligence and orders is organized, in which, what are called "Unions," hold a conspicuous place. These "Unions," which are daily becoming more numerous, consist of classes or subdivisions of Reformers, who hire an apartment convenient for their local residence, where they procure newspapers and pamphlets of a seditious tendency. Notwithstanding the distresses of the times, there are few operative manufacturers, who do not find the means of reading such publications.

The assumed right of mustering from various quarters, to the point of meeting, with banners, bearing seditious symbols and inscriptions, or with inscriptions, which, though unexceptionable in the abstract, are made to serve the same purpose, has swelled the ranks of the disaffected, in consequence of the temptations which are thus afforded to idle curiosity: and the impunity with which this is done, has added to the effect which the speeches delivered on such occasions have on the minds of hearers already discontented, and predisposed to listen with eagerness and credulity to the prospects of innovation, so confidently held out to them.

Three of these meetings have been held within the last three months, in the county of Renfrew. The second of these, held on the 11th of September, was followed by disturbances which continued for three days before they

were effectually suppressed. At the last meeting, held on the 1st of November, at a village some miles distant from Paisley, numerous flags were carried in procession, bearing inscriptions calculated to convey alarm into the minds of the well affected, and inspire those of different dispositions with confidence in an impending revolution. There were also at this last meeting, two important features which had not been witnessed in those by which it was preceded—the junction of bands of females, as part of the exhibition, *and the display of arms.* The ostensible arms were chiefly bludgeons, *but it is well known that many were prepared both with pistols and other weapons.* Both in proceeding to the place of meeting, and in returning from it, there was a striking exhibition of movements, executed in the streets of the town by several thousand persons, with military precision, silence, and order. *The pretence alleged for arming was self-defence, and this precautionary measure was said to have reference to the late events at Manchester,* and to the exertions of the special constables and military, in quelling the riots at Paisley, on the 11th of September.

While these public meetings, thus held with a display of banners and arms, serve to inspire the disaffected with confidence in their numbers, they overawe and intimidate many who would otherwise have disclaimed seditious principles, and have gladly arrayed themselves in aid of the Civil Authority.

Even the special constables, who have been enrolled and provided with batons, for the preservation of public tranquillity, feel reluctant to act with that vigour which is necessary.

There is not, at present, in this county, any corps of Yeomanry Cavalry, nor armed association of any description whatever, to counteract these menacing preparations, nor any suitable accommodation for the reception of regular troops, so that they can be kept united, when



called on by the civil Magistrate, or saved from *that contamination of principle*, which is also an avowed object among the Reformers.

On the whole, I think it my duty explicitly to state to your Lordship, that while the *Reformers of this district call out "Order" at their meetings, and can systematically preserve it too, when it suits their policy or humour, their public harangues are of the most audacious and revolutionary description: the expectation of a subversion of the Government, is so deeply rooted in their minds, that whenever a leader shall arise, or a favourable moment occur, I fear a considerable portion of the population could not be depended on.*

I have been induced to enter more fully into the situation of this county, as I believe the above will not be found an inaccurate representation of the management and proceedings of the Reformers in some other disturbed districts of the West of Scotland.

I have the honour to be,

With the greatest respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient

Most humble servant,

GLASGOW.

The Right Hon. Viscount Sidmouth,

&c. &c.

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Halifax, Nov. 9, 1819.

Sir,

IT was expected that great numbers of persons would from here attend the meeting at Huddersfield, yesterday, but it was thought sufficient to close the alehouses at eight o'clock.

*It does seem to me, however, that a most outrageous breach of the peace was effected last night here. In truth, all we can expect is, that on the next occasion, absolute plunder and destruction of property, and perhaps of life, will be the consequence. This is the natural and obvious march of the spirit that pervades this part of the country.*

I enclose for Lord Sidmouth's information, copies of the examinations I have taken. It is my intention to apprehend the parties, and if the complaint be proved, to commit them, or hold them to bail to answer at the next assizes.

THOMAS HORTON.

To H. Hobhouse, Esq.

&c. &c. &c.

*West Riding of Yorkshire.* } John Brierley, Deputy Constable of Halifax, came before me, this ninth day of November, 1819, and on oath saith,

That near eight o'clock last evening, he met many hundreds of persons near to Barum Top in Halifax, coming, as he believes, from the meeting at Huddersfield; that they marched in ranks about eight or ten abreast, with music, and six or seven flags, and lighted candles; many of them had sticks, some large ones on their shoulders; that at Barum Top they shouted and fired many pistols in the air; as they went on, he thought they became more riotous, repeating their fire quicker, and he thought it his duty, though quite alone, to attempt to preserve the peace of the town; and with this view he went to the man who had the great drum, and *rapping on it with his constable's staff, charged him to cease playing or beating, saying, the town must not be disturbed in that way: that the drummer did cease to beat, as also the band in general, in a great degree: marching down the street, the firing went on again, also the music. Near the White*

Lion Inn, deponent received on his right leg a very severe kick, which nearly took his legs from under him ; he is certain that Joseph Baines, of Halifax, is the man who assaulted him, and ran away directly, treading backwards and forwards, through the ranks, and that he must have known deponent ; Baines was close to him, and deponent following him, till he was perfectly certain who it was ; deponent then went down the street with the crowd, the band playing all the way, and pistols being fired, and loud shouting made ; deponent says, the street down which the crowd marched is the most public one in the town, and they must have marched about half a mile through it, reckoning from Barum Top to the Talbot ; that, seeing the crowd halt at the front door of the Talbot, he ran round to the back door, and went in to get the front door fastened ; that a few of the mob had already entered the house.

That, in going down the street, he saw Joseph Wood, the son of James Wood, of Halifax, mason, and John Ingham, junior, of Halifax, plasterer, marching in the ranks of the mob ; that he cannot say who it was that fired any of the pistols ; that he left the mob at the Talbot door shouting and firing pistols, and went himself to have the alehouses near it shut up.

JOHN BRIERLEY.

Sworn before me,

Thomas Horton.

*West Riding of Yorkshire.* } Mr. David Mallinson, of Halifax, clerk,  
came before me, this 9th day of November, 1819, and on his oath, says,

That near eight o'clock last evening, he saw a large crowd of persons go down the main street of Halifax, with lighted candles, a band of music, and flags, shouting very much, and firing pistols ; that he followed them to the front of the Talbot Inn, where the crowd halted,

the door being fast ; that they marched in regular order ; that he observed Joseph Roberts, of Halifax, sail-maker, on the Talbot steps, speaking to the crowd, beginning by calling them brothers, or countrymen, or some such term ; that he does not know exactly what he said, but thinks the object of his speech was to call on the crowd to thank the band for their attendance, also saying something about radical reform ; that he saw Roberts that morning going towards Huddersfield with a stick in his hand, not a yard long, like a cudgel, but does not know whether he had it at night.

D. MALLINSON.

Sworn before me, Thomas Horton.

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Manchester, Nov. 10, 1819.

My Lord,

THE state of this town and neighbourhood remains much the same as when I last wrote to your Lordship. *On Sunday last, between six and eight o'clock, a pistol loaded with ball was fired into the lodgings or sitting room of a Mr. Mutrie, who gave evidence before the coroner on the inquest of John Lees, as to the attack of the mob on the Manchester Yeomanry. On Monday night, about eleven o'clock, a pistol, loaded with slugs, was fired into one of the bed rooms of Mr. Thos. Hardman's house, in Quay-street ; but fortunately, without injury ; and two or three other instances of the firing of pistols, with malicious intent, have also occurred. I mean ultimately to collect the instances, on oath, for your Lordship's information. I much fear they will increase before the meeting of Parliament, and most likely in a degree to call on the Legislature to interfere.* (r) Meetings still continue to be

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(r) It is a remarkable fact, that the circumstance of Mr. Mutrie's sitting room having been fired into, was scarcely heard of here, until this letter was made public ;



held, though not in this immediate neighbourhood. One was held at Wigan, about twenty miles distant, and another at Huddersfield, distant twenty-six miles, on Monday last, both large meetings.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's faithful and humble Servant,

Lord Viscount Sidmouth,

J. NORRIS.

&c. &c. &c.

Blackburn, Nov. 10, 1819.

My Lord,

I HAVE thought it expedient to transmit to your Lordship drawings of different pikes, which have been seized in this neighbourhood, for the purpose of removing the incredulity which even yet seems to prevail in some minds as to their existence. (s)

I must now request your Lordship's attention to another subject of immediate and urgent importance.

It is the general opinion, that the spirit of the reformers, as they entitle themselves, is on the decline; an opinion grounded solely on their present quiet and silence.

I have strong reasons for thinking very differently. For, in the first place, pikes continue to be made and cir-

whilst, of the alleged firing into Mr. Thomas Hardman's house, I never before heard a syllable. The hint that such cases "will increase before the meeting of parliament," gives some support to the current opinion that these cases were *timed* with a view to that event. I shall only say, it is strange, that in four or five cases "of the firing of pistols with malicious intent," not one instance of the slightest injury to any individual should have occurred. Does not this fact render it probable that nothing further was intended, than that *the report of them should be heard in the House of Commons?*

(s) The learned Doctor's expedient "for removing the incredulity which even yet seems to prevail in some minds as to the existence of pikes," is much upon a par with that of the man, who *proved* the personal existence of the Devil, by saying, he had "*often seen the picture of him.*"

culated daily, in different parts of the country, and with perfect impunity, as, in consequence of former seizures, the makers will sell to none but known friends, and will enter into no conversation with strangers (excepting in a single instance) on the subject.

I have the honour to be, &c.

T. D. WHITAKER.

To Lord Viscount Sidmouth.

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*Haigh Hall, Wigan, Nov. 11, 1819.*

My Lord,

ONE of the seditious meetings, the nature of which I need not describe, was held on a common, distant about two miles from Wigan, on Monday the 8th instant. Its object was evidently to feel for the disposition of the inhabitants of Wigan and its vicinity.

About six thousand persons assembled round the temporary stage, and probably about four thousand persons more were present, but they remained at such a distance as shewed that curiosity alone had led them to that spot. The meeting was held at the requisition of some *low persons* of Wigan, but they were joined on the common by the *dangerous rabble of Bolton*, who were all armed with bludgeons, and RUMOUR says, with arms, chiefly loaded pistols, which was manifested by the explosion of them towards the close of the day. Harrison addressed them from the stage or platform.

The mob carried eighteen flags, with the usual symbols of sedition; they had selected the day of the quarter sessions being held at Liverpool, for their meeting; but the Magistrates of Wigan and its vicinity were aware of that *trick*, and remained at their post. The Magistrates were seven in number, myself being the chairman, which has induced me to trouble your Lordship with a communication of the events of the day.

Sir William Gerard, with thirty-nine of his Yeomanry Cavalry, being the effectives of two troops, attended Wigan at the requisition of the Magistrates. As the leaders had selected a large common for their meeting, the Magistrates thought it advisable not to interfere with them, as, situated there, they could do no mischief; and they thought it quite sufficient to send to the spot a body of special constables to preserve the peace and order; the Magistrates, Yeomanry Cavalry, and the *superior class* of the inhabitants of Wigan, remained in the *burgh*, awaiting the result. In this position the Magistrates rested, having determined, that as the meeting of Parliament was so near, they would pay no attention either to the leaders or their flags, and *the day passed away with the greatest order and tranquillity.*

I have the honour to remain,

Your Lordship's faithful and obedient Servant,  
BALCARRES.

Viscount Sidmouth,  
&c. &c. &c.

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The following is an Extract from the Speech of Mr. Harrison, on Monday the 8th of November, 1819.

“If any man molests you, or oppress you, knock him down—keep him down—and cut him when he is down.”

It has been inculcated here, and with too much success, that the people have a right to carry concealed arms, *for the purpose of self-defence, against the disturbers of their meetings.* (1)

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(1) “It has been inculcated here, and *with too much success*, that the people have a right to carry concealed arms, for the purpose of self-defence against the disturbers of their meetings.” Provided their meetings be peaceable, and for a legal object, there can be no doubt that hitherto the people have a right to carry arms *for the purpose of defending themselves against the disturbers of their meetings.* Few will deny either, that they have or ought to have that right.

*Police Office, Manchester, Nov. 12th, 1849.*

My Lord,

WE have the honour to commence our official correspondence with your Lordship on a painful and alarming subject—the attempted assassination of Mr. Nadin—an event which we understand was communicated to your Lordship by Mr. Norris, the evening it occurred.

By the posting bill herewith inclosed, your Lordship will be informed of the measures which we have adopted: and we beg leave to submit to your Lordship's consideration, the propriety of offering a pardon, on the conditions proposed.

Up to the present time, we regret to state, that we have not any further information on the subject, than the description given by Mr. Nadin, but every exertion will be made for the discovery of the offender.

We have not hitherto addressed your Lordship on the political state of the town and neighbourhood, having been informed that Mr. Norris has regularly communicated the passing events. On this important subject we regret that it is not in our power to report favourably. *The system of arming is continued to a great extent*, and although it does not appear to be the intention of the reformers to hold a general meeting previous to the assembling of Parliament, from the best information we can obtain, we learn that arrangements are making for delegates, or agents, to attend and watch the proceedings of Parliament; and in the event of measures being adopted, which they may consider inimical to their views, *then a signal to be given for an immediate simultaneous rising.* (u)

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(u) There is amongst men of all parties an almost unanimous disbelief of the fact, stated in the commencement of this letter. I shall, in a future part of this book, give my reasons at length, for not attaching credit to the story. The Borough-reeve and Constables say, that "in the event of measures being adopted, which they (the Reformers) may consider inimical to their views, then a signal to be given for an immediate general rising." The gentlemen by whom this letter is signed, are not to be confounded with those who were in office on the 16th of August. At this



In a few days we hope for further information, which we will immediately communicate to your Lordship, as well as the particulars of other information, which we have obtained periodically, during the present week ; and which, we trust, will be acceptable.

We beg to assure your Lordship, that, during this eventful period, our utmost attention and exertion shall be devoted to preserve the peace of this town and neighbourhood ; to aid which, we rely on the cordial support of His Majesty's government.

We have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

Most obedient humble Servants,

THOMAS SHARP, Boroughreeve.

JOHN ORFORD,

RICHARD SMITH, } Constables.

To the Right Honourable

Lord Viscount Sidmouth,

Secretary of State, &c. &c.

Whitehall.

*Lancashire* } The Examination of \*\*\*\*, taken upon oath,  
*to wit.* } before Laurence Halstead, Esquire, one of  
 His Majesty's Justices of the Peace in and  
 for the County of Lancaster, the 15th November, 1819.

ON my arrival in Burnley this morning, I found Colonel Hargreaves on horseback, and all the military in rea-

early period of their official proceedings, I would entreat them not to be hasty in forming conclusions, so much to the discredit of large bodies of their fellow countrymen. Above all, I caution them against giving entire credence, to evidence, with which they may be furnished by their usual purveyors, unless confirmed by testimony of a much less equivocal character.

diness. The reformers were coming with their flags, caps of liberty, and bands of music. They had with them large staffs and sticks. I went to the Bull public house, and shortly after the Colonel came with one of the staffs in his hand, which he had taken from one of the reformers. It was the shaft of a pike. The man broke from him, and escaped in the crowd. *The Colonel was desirous not to call the military out to action on this circumstance alone, for he said to me, that if the reformers were quiet, the Magistrates would suffer them to meet.* I saw the reformers pass by the Sun, *orderly and quietly*; and I followed them to the place where the hustings were erected; and then my friend and I found all those who had staffs and sticks with them, employed cleaning out the hole at the end, to admit the pike, for they were all of them shafts for pikes; they cleaned out the gravel; they had used the sticks and staffs to walk with, and they were full of dirt and gravel, which they picked out with the shaft end of the pike. They generally had the pikes in the sleeve of the coat, and some had them concealed in their breasts. I saw a great many pikes on the ground. *They were not very cautious in concealing them; a many shewed them without fear.* The pikemen were nearest to the hustings; and behind them there were a many who had pistols; I saw a great number of pistols on the field. I saw one person who was wounded by one of the pikes being accidentally thrust against his leg. Whilst writing this, a person came into the room, and said, that he had seen a man who was cut in the breast by his own pike. The shafts of the pikes were hooked with iron hoops, like that which the Colonel had taken. On the hustings there were about thirty persons, all of them strangers to me except Knight, who wore the red cap of liberty on the hustings, and was chairman, the sailor boy (or Walker) from Manchester, and George Dewhurst of Blackburn. They had eighteen flags and three caps of liberty: on one of the flags was wrote, Fitz-

william and the Yorkshire Reformers; and on one of the caps, Liberty or Death; which, in particular parts of the orators' speeches, was hoisted aloft on its pole, and then dropped again, and taken off. The speeches of the orators were such as are generally made at the meetings of the reformers, holding up the Ministers and Magistrates, and officers of Justice, to contempt and ridicule.

The number of reformers was very great; I measured the circle they occupied round the hustings; it was one hundred and fifty yards; and I judge, that if all who were on the outside circle had been in it, they would have been as close as it is possible for men to stand. The most striking of their resolutions is, that which called upon them to oppose the measures of Parliament, if they would attempt to pass any Bills which should control their liberty of meeting; it called upon them to rise and oppose such things, and all those who were for them; *and the passing of such bills should be the signal for universal rising.* This resolution made a particular impression on the minds of the reformers; *they all evinced a determination to oppose all such things.* On the breaking up of the meeting, they separated into two bodies; one came to Burnley, and the other a different way. They remained a long time in the road and fields adjoining where they separated, and then they began to discharge their pistols, swearing they should like a dust with the soldiers before they parted. They fired scores of pistols in the road, whilst they were there. I left them before they separated, for I was afraid they would do something that would bring out the soldiers; and all the way to Burnley, (for the meeting was about half a mile from the town) as I walked on, *I heard hundreds of pistols discharged in all directions. It resembled Manchester and its neighbourhood, on the night of the 5th November, for firing in all directions as they went away.* Mr. Knight did not stop in the lane, but went on to Burnley with the other of his

friends ; and the firing did not commence till he had left them in the road. They appeared anxious for the soldiers to come ; happily they did not : for if they had, the mischief would have been serious on both sides. On coming into Burnley again, I saw the military posted in various parts of the town, and Col. Hargreaves in attendance at the Bull public house. My friend and I, when we had seen the pikes and pistols round the hustings, we went in search of Colonel Hargreaves ; we did not find him, but left a note for him, that if they wished to make a seizure of pikes and pistols they might take a great number, for all who had sticks or staffs, had pikes in the sleeve of the coat, or in the breast, for we had seen a great many, and they were all like that which the Colonel took, hooped at the hole end with a strong iron hoop. As soon as night came on, the town was thrown into alarm by the fire bell. I immediately heard the bugle sounding for the military. A cotton factory had got accidentally on fire ; but was soon put out, without doing much damage. Whilst I was on the field, I heard a great many say, that if the Colonel, that Devil, came, they would give him enough ; and intimating, at the same time, that they would put him to death. If he had brought up the soldiers, they could not have acted, from the particular situation of the ground. The field is a three-cornered one, with high hedges and walls near it.

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Sworn before me, one of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace, in and for the said county, 15th November, 1819.

Laurence Halstead.

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*Pontefract, November 18, 1819.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship, the result of such information as I have received in the seve-



ral journies I have made since I left town, and from credible authority in other places.

It appears certain, that simultaneous meetings had been agreed upon, to assemble on the 1st of this month, at Newcastle upon Tyne, at Carlisle, at Leeds, Halifax, Huddersfield, and Barnsly, in the West Riding of Yorkshire; at Manchester, Bolton, Wigan, Blackburne, and Burnley, in Lancashire; at Newcastle under Lyme, at Nottingham, at Leicester, and at Coventry. I have heard other places named, but not from such authority that I can name them in this report; nor do I mention the meetings in London, in Scotland, and in places not in the counties composing the districts in which I hold the military command.

As meetings had very lately been held in almost all the above named towns, those agreed upon for the 1st instant, must have had some particular object in view.

Although a schism among the leaders has prevented these meetings, yet in Lancashire and some few towns where disaffection has long prevailed, no difference appears, and the numbers of discontented remain undiminished; but in places where it is of less mature existence, a most desirable check, from various causes, has been effected; but it would be fatal to its annihilation in them, if there was yet any relaxation of our attention, and of means to suppress it entirely: a similar false security at times within the last three years, has brought disaffection to its present height in Lancashire, the vigilance of the civil authorities in it having ceased upon every short period of quiet.

A plan has been adopted, to circulate more generally seditious and blasphemous tracts, which is to send gratis such publications weekly, directed to the servants in large families, which I think worthy of mention, not merely to shew how indefatigable the authors and leaders of sedition are, in effecting their purpose, but that it may be

thought expedient to put the heads of families upon their guard.

Six different attempts have come to my knowledge, to seduce the soldiers, but without the least effect ; some of them are under legal investigation.

I have only further to add, that whatever disunion may prevail among the leaders of sedition and radical reform, they still unite in the endeavour (though I hope with less success) to excite irritation and discontent among their followers, and to intimidate the loyal and well affected.

With a firm belief in the accuracy of the foregoing statement, I consider it my duty to make this report.

I have the honour to be, with respect,

Your Lordship's

Very obedient humble servant,

JOHN BYNG,

M. General.

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IN the preceding notes, I have given to the correspondents of his Majesty's Ministers, perhaps, even greater advantages than those to which they could fairly lay claim. I have *assumed* and *taken for granted* (with very minute exceptions) the respectability and veracity of the whole series of *alphabetical* deponents. And with all this in their favour, I will venture to assert, that never did, and never can, Ministers submit to the House of Commons, a case, of which the portentous announcement so strongly contrasts with the flimsy reality. The difference between paper depositions and *vivâ voce* testimony, is well known by all who are conversant with Courts of Justice; but when, in addition to this fact, these paper depositions are *anonymous*, they become, with respect to any purpose of liberal and enlightened legislation, as "baseless as the fabric of a vision."

The *pretence* for suppressing the names of the various deponents (*if any real names they have*) will of course, as upon former occasions, be, a desire to avoid exposing them to popular vengeance; but it may equally turn out, and it is much more probable, that in many instances, at least, *the names of the parties are suppressed, lest their character should be known*. What would be thought in a Court of Justice, if any individual were called upon to defend himself from the assault of unknown accusers, without any opportunity to impeach, to cross-examine, or to meet by opposing evidence, the charges they might think proper to bring forward? But if it should turn out, that this evidence has been *purchased*—that the means by which the accusers "live, and move, and have their being," is the getting up of testimony against the

people, who are judged with partiality, and convicted without opportunity for defence ; are these documents, in the eyes of any rational and moderate man, entitled to a moment's attention or belief ? And is it not a forfeiture of trust, and a dereliction of duty, if, upon grounds so narrow, so suspicious, and so untenable, the Grand Inquest of the Nation enacts **BILLS OF PAINS AND PENALTIES AGAINST THE PEOPLE ?**

I have avoided encumbering the immediate notes I have made upon the various documents which have reference principally to this part of the country, by any lengthened observations upon the *literary* acquirements and taste of their authors, of which, however, we have many a marvellous specimen in the preceding text. Indeed, most of the communications from the Magistrates in this district (including Mr. Horton, of Halifax) are such, that we might have adopted the supposition of a public writer, that, the clerks being all out of the way, their worships had been obliged to write for themselves, were it not, that the specimens of the correspondence of one of them (Mr. Lloyd) with which we are favoured, go far towards verifying the old adage of "*Like master, like man.*" The letter of Col. Fletcher, dated August 10th ; that of the Rev. W. R. Hay, (a member of *two learned professions*, a minister *both of the gospel and the law*,) dated August 16th ; that of Mr. Norris, dated August 17th ; to which, though not exactly belonging to the same class, may be added, the epistle of Messrs. Moore and Andrew, dated Sept. 16th, as well as several others ; all make in proof of my assertion, that these persons are as much deficient in the simple attainment of English composition, as in a strict and vigilant regard to the constitutional rights of the great body of their fellow-subjects. If that fabric of well-regulated freedom, which has created and sustained our national greatness,



is to be levelled with the dust, let it be not by the slow and wearisome decay of time, but by a power commensurate with its own. If, at the moment of his weakness and exhaustion, the British Lion is to be assaulted and abused, the blows which strike most heavily on his worn-out frame—which inflict the keenest pangs upon his noble nature, will be those which are struck by the meanest and most ignoble of the animals that assail him.

# A REPLY

TO

MR. FRANCIS PHILIPS'S

*“ Exposure of the Calumnies circulated by the  
“ Enemies of Social Order, and reiterated by  
“ their Abettors, against the Magistrates and  
“ the Yeomanry Cavalry of Manchester and  
“ Salford.”*



# A R E P L Y,

&c. &c.

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WHEN I first saw the advertisement of Mr. Phillips's pamphlet, I was, from the title, naturally led to suppose that it would contain an enumeration of the various calumnies, to which, in his opinion, the magistrates and yeomanry have been subjected—that distinct charges would have been distinctly refuted ; that specific misrepresentations would have been pointed out ; and finally, that facts, which had been hitherto carefully withheld from the knowledge of the public, would have been brought forward in their justification.

A cursory perusal, on the evening of the day of its publication, shewed me how futile were my expectations : I found no new facts stated—no new arguments adduced—no new justification attempted. On the contrary, we have the same sweeping presumptions—the same groundless or exaggerated charges—the same incomplete evidence—and the same illegitimate conclusions, by which twenty-eight years of calumny against the friends of Reform have been invariably distinguished. So long as the great body of the labouring classes remained firm in their attachment to Church and King, or rather to Tory Politics, they were flattered, courted, and caressed. The wretches who, in 1791, maddened by intoxication to deeds of plunder and destruction, spread terror, and alarm, and ruin amongst the friends of public liberty, at Birmingham, were addressed even by the nobles of the land, as "*the friends of Church and King!*" and they were admonished



to “desist from their destruction of *any more* houses,” not on account of the intrinsic enormity of their conduct, but because “the great losses thereby sustained,” (then computed to be upwards of £100,000) would “fall eventually upon the county at large, and *not upon the persons to whom they belonged.*” The annual dinner of the Manchester Constitutional Society, the same year, was preceded by the publication of a hand-bill, unparalleled for the atrocity of its suggestions, and stating that “if Englishmen had the spirit they used to have, they would, on the 14th of July, pull the house where the members of the society assembled over their heads, and that *the brains of every man who dined there, would be much improved by being mingled with brick and mortar;*” whilst the actual riots which occurred here the next year, were not tacitly, but directly, encouraged and incited by persons of respectable station, and palliated even in the House of Commons by Mr. Windham, on account of the political opinions of those against whose property, if not lives, they were directed. At a period, several years more recent, a meeting constitutionally assembled in this town, to petition for peace, was assaulted by a ferocious mob, headed by the Reverend Mr. Wilkinson, a Minister of the Church of England. Many other instances of similar proceedings might be adduced, but these are sufficient for my purpose. They furnished the Ministers of that day with no ground for enactments, restrictive of the liberty of the people. They gave rise to no animated expositions of apprehended danger—they were not mistated in their origin—exaggerated in their extent—distorted in their progress—or misrepresented in their conclusion, for the purpose of giving a factitious importance to the designs, or a false impression of the intentions, of their abandoned perpetrators. At these periods, the self-styled friends of “social order,” felt no alarm; for, excesses founded in attachment to the “*good old cause,*” were either extenuated with anxious

zeal, or, at most, only subjected to a mild and moderate censure. It is true, that the law did not sleep : some of the Birmingham rioters were brought to trial ; several, to the utter astonishment of the court, and in direct opposition to the evidence, were acquitted : whilst a few were prosecuted to conviction, and four were ultimately executed. But none of the actors in the other above mentioned disgraceful outrages, were, I believe, ever brought to justice.

It would require a space greater than I can devote to this part of my subject, were I to attempt to trace even a rapid sketch of the gradual alteration of opinion and feeling in the minds of the labouring classes. Suffice to observe, (it is the Weavers to whom I am principally alluding,) that in proportion as the lengthened continuance of the war produced a two-fold diminution of their comforts, by reducing the rate of their wages, at the same time that the imposition of fresh taxes, and the advanced price of articles of food, necessarily increased their expenditure ; their political feelings, (rather than principles) underwent a rapid change ; they began to doubt the wisdom of measures which brought to them only an accession of misery : it was no longer possible to get up from amongst them a Church and King Riot ; they began openly to express their dislike of the policy of the Ministry of the day, and they have ever since been taunted and vilified by charges of disaffection and disloyalty.

In the spring of the year 1808, they attempted to obtain an act of parliament for the permanent regulation of their wages. Disappointed in this object, they met at the latter end of May in St. George's Fields. They assembled on successive days ; attempts were made to induce them to depart peaceably, and it was not until after those attempts had been found unsuccessful, and the people (supposed to amount to 10 or 15,000 men) had continued assembled

more than an hour after the reading of the riot act, that military force was called in to disperse them, which object was effected with little further injury than the loss of one life. Upon this occasion, some acts of violence and undoubted illegality were committed by the Weavers; such, for instance, as interfering to prevent work being taken out at a price less than they chose to fix. In the spring of 1812, commercial distress was at its height. The orders in council of our own Government, with the prohibitory commercial decrees of the United States, and of France, together with the failure of some ill-judged speculations, had for the time almost annihilated the foreign commerce of the country. The manufacturer and merchant suffered dreadfully from the bankruptcies, with which the columns of the gazette teemed; whilst the operatives were reduced to penury and distress, not merely by the reduction of wages, but by the difficulty of obtaining work. Add to this the introduction into our manufactories, about the same time, of some important improvements in machinery, which, by abridging the demand for human labour at a period when other circumstances had rendered the supply superabundant, materially increased the sufferings, and consequently the irritation, of the people. Thus, in Nottinghamshire, popular fury was directed against the stocking frames; in the West Riding of Yorkshire, against the cropping machines; and in this county and Cheshire, against blowing machines and steam looms.

One would have thought, that these natural, obvious, and sufficient, causes of the irritation and violence of our manufacturing population at that period, might have been universally recognized as the true ones; and that no mischievous or perverted ingenuity would have attempted to represent the unjustifiable excesses, resulting from severe suffering and ignorant prejudice, as the offspring of political disaffection. However great might be the guilt of the deluded actors at that melancholy period, (and it

extended even to assassination,) no one could be so hardy as to deny the existence and the severity of their sufferings; yet, some there were, whose political and religious bigotry gladly made the infuriated proceedings of a misguided populace the pretext for endeavouring to throw obloquy and suspicion upon men of the most undoubted respectability and character. But, upon this part of my subject, I should be inexcusable if I did not avail myself of the assistance of those means of information, which are furnished by the statements of my estimable friend, Dr. Taylor, (late of Bolton.) Referring to the reports, which at one time had been most industriously circulated, that “those disturbances originated in political disaffection, or religious dissent,” Dr. Taylor, (in his Letters on the subject of the Lancashire Riots, in the year 1812,) observes, “An opinion so totally groundless can be viewed only as the offspring of an overheated and distempered imagination; and the pertinacity with which it has been maintained, in despite of all evidence, might in some persons have been considered as a fit subject only for pity or for ridicule. But, when such mischievous fancies are obstinately indulged in by men, whose situations in life give us a right to expect, that they should form no opinion on such subjects without the most substantial grounds—when it is found that men, whose authority can command access to the condemned cells of a prison, chuse to abuse this melancholy privilege, by base attempts to strengthen these hateful prejudices, they then become matter of very serious alarm; and when there was also reason to suspect that the fanciful reports of such men had been transmitted to Government with the intention of exciting an alarm, whereon to ground a suspension of the constitutional laws of the country; it then became the bounden duty of every one who respected that constitution, or who regarded the welfare and happiness of his neighbourhood, to do his utmost to remove from the minds of Go-



vernment any false impressions thereby produced, and to oppose, as far as in him lay, the granting of new, and discretionary, and uncontrolled powers, to men who had so grossly abused the powers already entrusted to them." With the objects disclosed in the preceding extract, Dr. Taylor and some of his friends proceeded to London. They offered themselves to be examined before the secret Committee of Parliament, which was appointed for the express purpose of examining "records and persons ;" but their evidence was *refused*. It is not my intention to go through the whole of the very important statements made by Dr. Taylor. The limits of my plan would not admit of it, and it would be in some degree foreign from my design. Some further reference to them will, however, be necessary hereafter, in order to enable the readers to form a correct opinion as to some circumstances noticed in Mr. Philips's Pamphlet. Though the period to which the preceding quotation from Dr. Taylor relates, is subsequent to the attack on the Manchester Exchange, in April 1812, it is necessary that I should, at some length, call the attention of the reader to that event, both because it is the first in the series of the Riots of that year, selected by Mr. Philips for observation ; and, because, the circumstances of the case have, on several recent occasions, been assiduously and ingeniously misrepresented. In a note to page xxvi. Mr. Philips says, with reference to the "declaration and protest, had a public meeting been convened, it would have been attended by the Radicals, who would have out-numbered and overpowered the respectable inhabitants, and *probably proceeded to demolish the Exchange, as was the case in 1812.*" The natural conclusion of any person upon reading this sentence, would be, first, that the attack upon the Exchange in 1812, was *the consequence of a public meeting* ; and secondly, that the Exchange *was demolished*. The facts of the case, widely different from this represen-

tation, were as follows :—Shortly before that period, the restrictions imposed upon the Prince Regent at the commencement of his Regency expired, and his Royal Highness having announced his determination to continue in office, the ministers who had been chosen by his father, a number of individuals belonging to that party in this town, which was distinguished by its attachment to the politics of those ministers, presented to the boroughreeve and constables a requisition to call a public meeting, for the purpose of conveying a complimentary address to the Prince Regent, on his assumption of full authority, and of thanking him for continuing in his service the ministers who were then in office. The 8th of April, 1812, was the day appointed for the meeting. There can be no doubt, that, when this measure was resolved upon, its friends thought themselves secure, if not of the support, at least of the neutrality, of the labouring classes ; and took it for granted, that having none to oppose them but persons of their own station, the game was entirely their own. But the time was one of general distress, and the hopes of a great portion of the kingdom had been anxiously fixed upon the period, when the Prince, emancipated from the trammels of unconstitutional restrictions, would adopt that system of policy, to which the friendships and the opinions of his previous life were thought likely to incline him. Those hopes were blasted, and the poor saw nothing but a determination to persevere in that course of conduct, which had resulted in the sufferings they were enduring. Nor were the respectable whigs of the town disposed to coincide in an address, such as they concluded it was intended to propose, for the adoption of the assembly ; and another address was prepared, which it was intended to move as an amendment. Several hand-bills were published, calling public attention to the approaching meeting, and calculated to ensure such an attendance, as that its decision should express the

unquestionable opinion of a majority of the inhabitants of Manchester. The ministerial party were exceedingly inveterate on account of the publication of these hand-bills. Shortly after the day on which the meeting was to have taken place, the late Mr. John Leigh Philips said to the gentleman by whom two or three of them (but not that which was called inflammatory) were written, "*If we cannot convict you of libel, we can harass you by prosecutions.*"

One of these hand-bills, published on the morning of the day when the meeting was to have been held, has been frequently represented as inflammatory; and, by those who wished to mislead the public, it has been stated as the cause of the attack which was afterwards made upon the Exchange. But, when the requisitionists found that they were likely to be in a minority—that they could no longer carry whatever public measures they might think proper to propose, they had not the magnanimity to await that decision, for which they themselves had called. The pretext, that the staircase leading to the large room at the Exchange was too weak to sustain the pressure of the crowd, was stated by the committee of that establishment, as a reason for refusing to the town's officers the use of it; and at the time fixed for the holding of the meeting, when some thousands of persons were assembled in St. Ann's Square, to proceed to it, hand-bills were distributed amongst them, by the bea-dles, announcing that the meeting would not take place. In the mean time, a large party, who had come with the view of attending it, not finding the dining room at the Exchange open, had gone into the news room. Alarmed by their appearance, the subscribers hastily withdrew; many of them, however, afterwards returned, and attempted to persuade the populace to retire. This they refused to do, but remained in full possession of the room, *for more than two hours*, without proceeding to



any act of violence. In the mean time, attempts were made, by the leaders of the party which was waiting in St. Ann's Square, to find the town's officers, by whom the meeting had been summoned, in order to request them to hold it at some other place; but none of those gentlemen were to be met with. After this, several individuals were successively recognized by the crowd, as amongst the number of those who had signed the requisition, and were invited to proceed with the meeting, and to take the chair, which they one and all refused: though a few days afterwards they mustered secretly, at the police office, and there voted, that address to the Prince, which they durst not submit to the judgment of a general meeting of their fellow townsmen, even though appointed at their own request. It is not surprising, that by such proceedings as these, the populace should have been irritated; they, as a part of the inhabitants of Manchester, were called together by the requisition—they came to the exercise of a constitutional right—they wished to have given expression to their opinions, with respect to that system of policy which they believed to be the cause of their distress; and their appearance produced—not a manly and rational conflict of independent opinion—not the relinquishment of an obnoxious proposition—not a fair and open trial of strength, between two opposing parties;—but a pretended abandonment of the meeting, upon a futile and unsatisfactory pretext, whilst at that very time it was no doubt determined, that the object of the proposers of the meeting should be secretly carried into effect.

But, however that may be, the naked fact, that the people felt themselves insulted and trifled with, by the conduct adopted towards them, is sufficient to account for the irritation which they felt, and to this irritation I have no difficulty in asserting, that the attack upon the Exchange was to be attributed. I have already said,



that for a very long period after they were in possession of the Exchange, (so long indeed as any expectation remained, that a public meeting would take place,) the conduct of the populace was peaceable. It is more to be lamented than wondered at, that they should subsequently proceed to riot. The windows and chairs of the Exchange building were broken, the maps torn from the walls, and set on fire in the middle of the room. But the fire was, by the spirited exertions of a few of the subscribers, extinguished, before it had done *any* mischief to the building itself. No circumstance has ever come to my knowledge, calculated to give the slightest character of premeditation to this injurious outrage ; and I am confident I do not err, in referring to the proceedings of the day, as the sum and substance of its origin. The tumultuary proceedings of the evening are fairly attributable to the same cause ; and I am wholly unable to conceive, how any impartial person can shew to be at all probable, the existence of any connection whatever, between the proceedings here on the 8th of April, which clearly originated in a distinct political transaction, and those attacks on the factories at Middleton and West Houghton, which were as clearly caused by an hostility to the use of steam looms.

I have no reason to believe, that the atrocity of the Middleton riots can be palliated by any attempt to prove, that the tricks and machinations of hired spies had any share in producing them. They originated in severe distress, exasperated by a short-sighted prejudice against the introduction of newly-invented machinery, which the populace fancied was calculated to aggravate the sufferings they were enduring. The attack of the mob upon the factory, and their destruction of the house of one of its owners, were crimes of the greatest enormity : much, therefore, as the consequences were to be deplored, no doubts were entertained of the legality of the conduct

pursued. However humanity might grieve, at the death of those who were shot by the military, Justice was satisfied.

But at West Houghton, where a steam loom factory was set on fire, and burnt down, the case was widely different. This outrage was debated (as appeared by evidence on the trials of the rioters) at a meeting which took place on Dean Moor, near Bolton, the 19th of April, 1812, sixteen days before the scheme was put in practice. At this meeting (which was very speedily reduced to numerical insignificance, by the desertion of a considerable proportion of those who had at first attended it) there were present, during the greater part of its duration, and up to the time of its close, not more than about forty persons, of whom no less than ten or eleven were spies, reputed to be employed by Col. Fletcher. On this occasion, these spies were *armed*, and disguised with *blackened faces*. And when some persons wished to retire from the meeting, on finding the wicked purpose upon which it was bent, they were prevented from so doing, by a *rear guard*, formed chiefly of the *armed spies*, and marched *by force* towards West Houghton, where a considerable detachment of military were in *ambuscade*, awaiting their approach. Upon this occasion, the spies were provided with *white caps*, to put on when they should come in contact with the military, in order that being recognized, they might not be hurt.

But all the exertions of the spies were insufficient to enable them to carry their plan into effect. The unfortunate victims of their diabolical machinations could not, at that time, be induced to act; one by one they slunk away from the meeting, till the spies were left alone. So that, when a detachment of the local militia, which was sent from Bolton, at midnight, to pick up stragglers, had succeeded in apprehending a considerable number of supposed Luddites, they were, upon exami-

nation, every man of them, proved to belong to the corps of black-faced spies, and consequently dismissed.

The occurrence of circumstances like these, sixteen days before the burning of the factory took place, renders it not a matter of presumption, but of absolute certainty, that that alarming outrage might have been prevented, if to prevent it had been the inclination of either the spies or their employers.

I am not aware, that the truth of the preceding statements, which I have abridged from Dr. Taylor's Letter, and which have now been before the public nearly seven years, has ever been at all questioned. But however that may be, I know that proof of them can be given upon oath, to such an extent as must be absolutely decisive of their veracity. At the special commission held at Lancaster, for the trial of the rioters of that period, eight persons were capitally convicted. At Chester, though fifteen were condemned to death, two only were ultimately executed. But the conduct pursued at Lancaster formed a striking contrast with this dignified lenity. There, every person convicted, MAN, WOMAN, and CHILD, were consigned to the hands of the EXECUTIONER. ONE OF THESE VICTIMS WAS A BOY SO YOUNG AND CHILDISH, THAT HE CALLED ON HIS MOTHER FOR HELP, AT THE TIME OF HIS EXECUTION, THINKING SHE HAD THE POWER TO SAVE HIM.

Upon this transaction my mind has often dwelt, until my imagination has pictured the whole *dreadful* scene to my fancy. The dreadful apparatus of death—the scarcely human form and visage of the executioner—the agonized and convulsed expression which glared in the countenance of the prisoners, as a hurried and fearful look askance at the surrounding objects, gave them a melancholy assurance that they stood on the verge of eternity ;—all these images have passed before my mind, until I have shrunk with horror from the dreadful ima-

gery. But there is still another object—a CHILD—a victim young in years, yet younger in capacity—the executioner approaches him—he too must die—the fatal cord is bound around his neck—from gloomy and lethargic apathy, the dreadful consciousness of his approaching fate bursts upon his mind—he recollects the protector of his helpless childhood—the ties which first bound him to life are the last to be severed—he cries to his mother—that being who gave him existence, to save him—but—the fatal drop falls!—DEATH arrests the half-uttered sentence, which quivers in a stifled echo on the lip of expiring infancy!

That heart must indeed be callous—destitute of human feelings and affections, that can coolly look upon death as a fit punishment for the crimes of a boy; but, where it was known, that those crimes were not the consequence of depravity of disposition or character;—that, of tender years and weak capacity, “he had fallen in the practice of a hellish slave,” we cannot but lament, that the severity of justice was not at once relaxed, that the suggestions of mercy might be eagerly adopted\*.

Language cannot furnish a term, nor the mind of man conceive an idea, sufficiently expressive of my feelings, or I believe of those of the public, with respect to the infamous agents, and the yet more infamous prompters, by whom this carnival of death was spread; but though they have hitherto silenced the voice of conscience, and stifled every sentiment of remorse, the time will come, when their deeds shall rise in judgment against them; at that time, when the hand of death presses coldly and

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\* One of the Birmingham rioters was Daniel Rose. He was brought to the bar on a charge of setting fire to the house of John Taylor, Esq.; but being only sixteen years of age, the counsel for the prosecution hoped that he might yet be useful to society, and called no evidence against him. *He was of course acquitted.* But this leniency was exhibited by reformers.



heavily on their hearts, how dreadful will be their retrospections !

I have dwelt at greater length upon the affairs of 1812, than the title of my work might seem to justify ; or perhaps, some persons may think, than circumstances call for ; they are however not only of fearful importance in themselves, but they mark the progress of that system, to the consummation of which the transactions of the 16th of August, are to be traced.

Passing by the short and fleeting interval of comfort and good wages, which the Weavers enjoyed, when the disasters experienced by the French Armies opened the continental markets to the adventurous spirit of our merchants ; I come to that period of severe suffering and depression, which the political economists of the ruling party characterised, somewhat unintelligibly, as a “ revulsion, occasioned by the change from war to peace.” In the calculations made by the labourers as to the benefits which peace was to bring them, and which included a full recompence for the privations they had endured whilst the war continued, no account was taken, no deduction made, of the effects of this formidable “ revulsion.” They had short-sightedly supposed, that peace would at once give them not merely an increase of wages and greater plenty, and regularity of employment, but also a relief from many taxes ; which they took it for granted would cease with the war, for the maintenance of which they were imposed. But the giving of a factitious value to the price of corn, to enable the landed interest to pay the impositions to which it was subjected, was a measure which has produced a deep and lasting irritation in the minds of the labouring classes, that was far from counter-balanced by the effect of the repeal of the malt tax, which which was meant as a concession to please them, when the House of Commons decreed the cessation of the tax upon property.

The distress of the labouring classes seemed rather to increase than diminish ; and in the summer of 1816 was held at Middleton the first popular meeting, I believe of that description, of which this district, and indeed many other parts of the kingdom, have since witnessed so many examples. Meetings were soon afterwards held in most of the neighbouring towns and villages. Several took place in Manchester ; but, as winter approached, they gradually became more insignificant in point of the numbers that composed them, or the impression they were calculated to produce. It must not be forgotten, that the principal object of all those meetings, was to petition in favour of reform. To the importance of that measure, the labouring classes were now not only fully alive, but they attached to it an idea of immediate efficaciousness, in which its considerate advocates, however sanguine with regard to the ultimate benefits of the measure, did not coincide. At this period too, first came into general notice, that class of persons, who have since been so well known, under the description of itinerant orators ; most of them, probably, men of some natural talent and eloquence, but with few exceptions (none in this immediate neighbourhood) persons averse to depending for their livelihood upon any regular or laborious employment.

At length, on the 10th of March, 1817, was held, at St. Peter's Field, that meeting, which is yet familiarly known by the term of "the blanket meeting." To Mr. Mitchell, whose claims to the name of spy have lately been so largely discussed, belongs the *credit* of having invented this equivocal mode of petitioning ; but it is well known that there was a considerable difference of opinion, with respect to the propriety of it, amongst the most active of the reformers themselves. From the meeting, however, several hundreds of persons set out on their road to London. Some time after their departure, a considerable detachment of the king's dragoon guards rode rapidly up

to the hustings, which they surrounded, taking those who were upon them (amongst whom were Baguley and Drummond) into custody. The meeting was then dispersed by the troops, with very little injury to the persons assembled\*. Here, however, is to be found the precedent for that novel form of reading the riot act, (if in either case it were read at all) which was followed on the 16th of August. The act was certainly not read according to the mode prescribed by the statute, nor were the crowd allowed that time for dispersion, which the law gives them. When the field was cleared, a large body of soldiers and constables were despatched after those, who had proceeded on the road towards London. They came up with them on Lancashire-hill near Stockport. Some hundreds were taken into custody, and one industrious cottager, resident on the spot, was shot dead by the pistol of a dragoon, at whom a stone was said to have been thrown from the situation, where with others the poor man stood. In this case a verdict of "wilful murder" was returned by the coroner's jury, but I am not aware that any steps were ever taken to bring the delinquent to justice. Trifling as was the general amount of injury sustained on this occasion, I have the means of stating, positively, that this circumstance was owing, rather to the humanity and coolness of the military, than of the magistrates and municipal officers. Sir John Byng repeatedly found it necessary to check the violence and impetuosity of the civil authorities.

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\* It is not the fashion amongst the high party in Manchester, to endeavour to reason with the people. The blanket scheme was so absurd and foolish, that I have little doubt, a few sensible observations upon the subject, by some of the authorities, would have induced the people to lay it wholly aside. Such a conciliatory mode of conduct was found effective, some time previous, when the Staffordshire colliers were going up to London, drawing several waggon loads of coals with them, to present to the Prince Regent. I cannot at once refer to the particulars, but my readers will doubtless remember, that the magistrates remonstrated with the poor fellows, purchased their coals, and induced them to return home. For my part, I like this plan better than exposing the poor to military execution.

But, as there did not appear the slightest ground for concluding that the persons arrested had been guilty of any definite offence against the laws, the conduct pursued with respect to this dispersion of the meeting, was by many persons severely blamed. And with a view, probably, of affording some justification for prior proceedings, a most notable plot was got up, the *denouement* of which was made public on the 28th of March. It was announced as “a most daring and traitorous conspiracy, the object of which was nothing less than open rebellion and insurrection.” It was stated that, an intention existed to set fire to the town of Manchester, and that “the night of the 30th of March” was fixed upon for the perpetration of this diabolical crime. Upon this accusation, about a dozen persons were, on the evening of the 27th of March, 1817, taken into custody at Ardwick, and in other parts of the town, amongst whom were two *spies*. One of these worthies assumed the name of Warren; his real name being Haddington, and his place of abode, Bolton. The other was a man named Lomax, a barber, at Bank Top\*. After the first burst of astonishment and alarm, which this intelligence caused, had subsided, people began to inquire a little into the probability of its being well founded, particularly as the 30th of March

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\* It was denied in parliament, by ministers, that this man was a spy; he however was known to be most intimately connected with Waddington, whose being so was undisputed. At any rate, he was taken into custody on the 27th March, on the charge stated above; but, as well as Waddington, almost instantly released. It was further admitted, that he had written to Lord Sidmouth on the 17th March, offering to become a spy. Michael Hall, another spy, who assumed the name of Dewhurst, was in the house at Ardwick when these parties were arrested, but it was arranged that he should escape. Since Waddington's exposure in the House of Commons, he has often been called “blackface” (spy.) On one occasion, he shot a young man who applied a term of that sort to him. He was held to bail on this *unbailable* charge, by Colonel Fletcher or Major Watkins, and in the mean time it was managed, that the complainant should be indicted at the Salford sessions for riot; Waddington being the principal witness against him. Being convicted, he of course had little chance of obtaining justice against Waddington, and indeed he had not money to purchase it.



had passed without the slightest discernable symptom of popular effervescence. In order, probably, to arrest the current of public incredulity, the Rev. W. R. Hay, stipendiary chairman of the Bench of Magistrates, in his charge to the Grand Jury at the Salford sessions, as reported in Wheeler's Manchester Chronicle, of the 26th April, stated, that when the trials of the parties accused came on, "purposes of the blackest enormity must be disclosed to the public," and that those "who *professed* to doubt their existence, would be finally constrained to admit the existence of the whole of them." But, notwithstanding this positive official assurance, all the persons arrested on the imputation of these atrocious designs were discharged, not only without trial, but without any indictment being ever preferred against them. It was probably from feeling how little likely the statement of this fact was to increase public faith in the truth of magisterial accusations, that Mr. Philips has prudently suppressed all notice of, or even allusion to it.

But it seems (Appendix No. 2) that "the line of conduct pursued (in 1817,) was entirely preventive." What! was it "preventive conduct" to drag men to prison on charges "of the blackest enormity," which have since been proved *if they were not then known* to be utterly groundless? Was it "preventive conduct" to employ convicted felons, (and two at least of these villains were employed) as spies, when it could not but be known how much more likely they were to create mischief, than merely to watch or correctly to report it? I acknowledge the propriety of no conduct which is founded on a breach of justice or of law. I acknowledge the humanity of no conduct which scatters accusations as baseless as their substance is terrible, and seeks in a bill of indemnity, protection against the consequences of the offence. As Mr. Philips states, that "the Magistrates and other public functionaries received the thanks of

their fellow townsmen," for their conduct in March 1817, I ask him, when or where any *public* meeting was ever held, which *either* gave *its* thanks to those parties or to which their friends *durst* propose a resolution to that effect. Since the repeal of the habeas corpus suspension act, and the other measures enacted at the same time, the people have been rapidly acquiring political information, and their observing, upon the occasion of those restrictions, how little they could rely upon the House of Commons for protection of their liberties, together with the utter and unvaried disregard, if not contempt, with which their humblest petitions have been received by the House, has served to impress them with the strongest convictions; how little the House of Commons can be said to represent the people, how little it sympathises in their views and feelings, and how absolutely the welfare of the state requires that it should be thoroughly reformed.

I shall not at present enter into any disquisition upon the subject of Parliamentary Reform; nor shall I notice the various meetings held here, and in other places in the vicinity, for the furtherance of that important object. Whilst differences of opinion may fairly exist, as to the eligibility or desirableness of such meetings, or of the object in favour of which they were held, no man who has a character for veracity to preserve can deny, that they were invariably peaceable and orderly; or assert, that out of them has sprung the slightest injury to the person or the property of any individual whatever. To pretend, therefore, to view the tendency of these meetings with serious apprehension and dread, was at least premature; and I believe I am not incorrect, in attributing the bitterness of opposition which they excited, to vexation that the poor could no longer be induced to act as *privates* (my words are "marching in military array,") in the political battalions of the Tories. The latter would, therefore, gladly have prohibited the poor from all

means of political information—to hold a public meeting was of course to invade their privileges, whilst a clamour for reform *could* arise from nothing but a general intention to seize the property of the rich. That there are persons amongst the poor, and who are occasionally active in their political proceedings, whose views and wishes may extend to revolutionary tumult, it would be wrong and useless to deny; but this affords no ground for suspicion or complaint against the great body of the people; it gives no right to impute to them improper views and objects. As well might a foreigner describe us as a nation of thieves, because, unfortunately, we have some thieves amongst us. It is so obvious, that in estimating the character, the wishes, and the intentions, of the people, we must look to the conduct of the great body, and not to that of individuals, that I am surprised how any person who expects or even wishes to be considered a man of fairness or good sense, can for a moment adduce the vulgar or criminal impertinence of single persons, in proof of the violent and unlawful designs of a whole class\*. I certainly am not able to contradict the statement, that “sometimes the reformers used insolent and taunting observations, purposely to be heard by any respectable person they might meet or pass;” but I can safely say, that this practice was by no means general, nor so much so as to excite much observation, unless a person were disposed to be captiously watching to observe it.

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\* The following anecdote will demonstrate to *Mr. Philips*, the propriety of this observation. On the morning of the 16th of August, but before the catastrophe of the meeting, *one of his nearest relations* said, in the company of a friend of mine, that he “*hoped* the mob would give the soldiers an *opportunity* of firing upon them.” God forbid, however, that I should attribute such a wish to the whole class, to which *Mr. Philips* belongs, even though the affidavits at Buxton’s house, the Star Inn meeting, and some part of the address to the Prince Regent, seem to afford too much ground for doing so. I recommend it to *Mr. Philips*, however, to endeavour to introduce a more humane feeling into his own family.

I have noticed, in my remarks on the parliamentary documents, the design attributed to the Radicals of making a general division of property among themselves. And Mr. Philips is not behind hand with Lord Sidmouth's correspondents, in ringing in our ears this extravagant and silly calumny. He says (page 9,) "So confident of success had they become, that their insolence was insufferable; a general division of property, and a termination of *all* taxation, were considered inevitable; silver was rapidly disappearing from circulation, and many instances occurred of rents being purposely withheld, under the expectation that a revolution would cancel all such obligations. The consternation that prevailed was indescribable." And again, (page 48) "There was not an estate nor a dwelling-place, in their line of march, that had not been parcelled out in their imaginations to themselves; the division of property they considered certain; and the principal part of them expected the accomplishment of their wishes on that very day." The common rules of justice require evidence to support *any* charge, but the new system of ethics of which Mr. Francis Philips seems to be one of the patrons, disdains to be bound by the vulgar trammels of natural equity. In proportion as the proof of crime is deficient, are the accusations of it more loudly bellowed;—in proportion as the people remain peaceable, are they charged with a disposition to be tumultuous. For, as these calumniators of the most useful and most numerous class of their countrymen, cannot convict by their proofs of guilt, they endeavour to confound by their enormity of accusation. They take the vulgar proverb as THEIR rule of conduct,

" Lay it on thick—

" And some will stick ;"



whilst their happy knack at generalization preserves them from the *inconvenience* of being individually called upon to prove the truth of the charges they bring forward. But does Mr. Philips really flatter himself, that there is any individual in the country, dolt or idiot enough to believe such an accusation, so supported? I mean not to insinuate a doubt of Mr. Philips's personal veracity; but does he really believe, that any evidence which he could furnish, would suffice in a court of justice, to convict any individual of the offence of inculcating such dangerous and treasonable notions? If he can furnish such sufficient evidence against persons so offending, why has he not done it already? If he cannot, the charges he has brought against the great body of the labouring classes, he may reconcile to his conscience as he can.

If I were disposed to imitate him, I might take all his assertions in rotation, and meet them by a direct negative; but I shall content myself here with saying, that with considerable means of estimating the intelligence, and judging of the dispositions of the people, no one fact has ever come under my personal knowledge, which can give the slightest sanction to Mr. Philips's opinions or statements. And with respect to the consternation which he affirms to have existed, however individuals may have alarmed themselves, it certainly was not general, or even common. There was no open and public manifestation of it; and "*de non apparentibus et de non existentibus eadem est ratio.*"

Mr. Philips's assertion, (page 2) that "seasons of adversity are most congenial to the machinations of the disaffected; on such occasions *only* can they succeed in distributing their noxious poison," is quite contradictory of his statement, (page 7,) that "a very great proportion of the labouring classes were never better off, *except as to politics and religion*, than at the present time." It is

not for me to attempt to reconcile his contradictions. With respect, however, to the situation of the weavers, who are the most numerous class of our population connected with the cotton trade, it is to be observed, that though, perhaps, their wages may now be somewhat higher than they have heretofore at times been, yet as those periods of depression, when wages were lower, have always been shorter in their duration than the present, the distress of the weavers, probably, never was so great as now. This will be rendered pretty evident when I state, that the result of an inquiry into the earnings of weavers, in all the different branches of our cotton manufacture, does not present a general average, taken for a long period, of 8s. per week. But supposing the wages of the weavers to be adequate to obtain for them a comfortable subsistence, does Mr. Philips think that therefore they would or ought to cease to be friends of reform? Does he take no account of the general spread of political information amongst the labouring classes? Does he think they can be now taught to forget that they have political rights to claim, as well as political duties to fulfil? Does he think they can be persuaded to leave politics to "*their betters*," to the "*higher orders*?" that the experience of the last thirty years is to be lost upon them? that they are to be utterly listless and unconcerned on subjects on which the sufferings or the comforts of their lives mainly depend? that those whose favourite political measures have entailed upon the country that burthen, which it is scarcely within the limits of possibility she shall much longer continue to sustain—that they are still to be held entitled to public confidence—still to guide public opinion, or to decide public measures? If Mr. Philips be so heedless of the lessons of experience, so regardless of the signs of the times, I have only to pray, that the respectable, middle, and more affluent

classes, may not generally be partakers in his errors or miscalculations.

The tone and temper of Mr. Philips's remarks, with respect to the manner and appearance of the people, on their way to and at the meeting, deserve a few observations. He says, (page 21,) "*One* man particularly attracted my notice, from his *audacious* appearance; having on his shoulder a club, as thick as the wrist, rough, newly cut, with the bark on, and many knots projecting. *My eye being directed towards him*, he shook his club at me in a *menacing* manner." Though I have no doubt, that Mr. Philips thinks his estimation of the character and views of the reformers is the correct one, I am equally certain, that the public will agree with me, that if he do err, it is not on the favourable or candid side; in as much as there are few crimes which can be contemplated or committed by a large body of persons, that he has not laid to their charge. I therefore cannot help thinking, either that there is a little unconscious colouring in the above description, or, what is more probable, that Mr. Philips had assaulted the fellow, by the expression of his countenance, before the latter returned the compliment, by the shaking of his club; particularly as Mr. Philips admits, that "when he mixed with the crowd," even near the Hustings, "no direct affront was offered him."

Mr. Philips's account of the meeting itself is very short, and does not contain much, except in the way of inference or supposition, to which it is possible to object. The regularity of approach to St. Peter's, the marching in military array\* (if it must be called so,) but which I

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\* On the 18th of April, 1814, a tremendous column marched, in "military array," through the streets of this town. In addition to all the wickednesses of music, flags, sticks, &c. exhibited by the reformers on the 16th of August, this body was guilty of the further sin of "*wearing cockades*." I have heard it whis-

could only recognize as the adoption of that plan of proceeding to the place of meeting, which was the farthest removed from any thing having at all the appearance of tumult; the flags, the music, the sticks, are all, with some minor differences of detail, characteristics, the exhibition of which, at the meeting, is admitted by every one.

With respect to the sticks: I saw a column pass down Mosley Street, (I do not know whether it was the same that Mr. Philips had seen at Ardwick, though, from the route by which it came upon the ground, that is not improbable.) Of the persons who composed it, however, I calculated at the time, that about one in ten, certainly not two in ten, had sticks; and I only saw one, which, from its appearance of freshness, seemed to have been provided specially for the occasion. I did not observe any which, according to the sagacious conclusion of Mr. Wheeler, were "shouldered as representative of muskets;" nor if I had, should I have considered it as of importance, any more than if they had been bestrode, "as representative of" horses. The friends of alarm, knowing that "walking stick" is not a term which would excite much terror, endeavour to make the formidable weapons of the weavers appear more fearful, by calling them "clubs and bludgeons." They were, however, nothing but common walking-sticks; and indeed I was much surprised to see so few even of them, for every one at all conversant with the habits of country-people hereabouts knows, that when they have far to walk, they seldom omit taking one with them.

To my view, the whole manner and appearance of the people, and I saw most of the different bodies, shewed

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pered, that Mr. Francis Philips was amongst them. I do not know that I can prove this; but if I should, it will not be much to his discredit, since it was a *procession in honour of the peace*. By the bye, however, that purpose is not more legal than a procession in favour of reform has *hitherto* been.



that they attached a degree of serious importance to the business, about which they were assembled. That their objects and intentions were peaceable, was proved to demonstration, by their bringing with them to the meeting, so many women and children; nor did I see an action, or hear a word, in the slightest degree obnoxious to the laws of the land. None, indeed, of the most bitter opponents of the meeting, none of the most anxious or the most acute defenders of the magistrates, have *yet* ventured to assert, that any the slightest act of violence had taken place before the charge of the cavalry. All that Mr. Hay could express at the time, was a conviction that the meeting "bore the appearance of insurrection." All that Mr. Francis Philips yet alleges, is a conviction of its "*revolutionary tendency*." In this state of perfect peace and quietness the assembly still continued; when the yeomanry cavalry came very rapidly upon the ground. The speed of their progress was such, even at some distance from the field, that a woman was knocked down, her child fell from her arms and was killed;\* an old man, considerably upwards of seventy years of age, was rode over, and both his arms were broken, as they turned the corner of the cottage wall. In describing the advance of the cavalry towards the hustings, Mr. Philips says, he "did not see a sword used." I am not aware that any person has ever asserted that he did. He "solemnly believes, that had the crowd given way to them, (the yeomanry,) no cuts would have been given." I know of no law, which authorizes

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\* Since this passage was written, an affidavit has appeared in Mr. Joseph Aston's paper, to prove that this child was not sabred. Mr. Philips also says, "it was said, that the child was sabred." I invite either Mr. Aston or Mr. Philips, to prove that this child was ever said to have been sabred, or to shew any probable ground for their assertion, that the real cause of its death was in any respect misrepresented. So far from it, the name of the yeoman, by whom its mother was rode down, is and long has been known; but as the circumstance was purely accidental, it has been carefully kept back.

a yeoman to sabre me, because I may not give way to him quite so soon as he wishes that I should. Besides, the density of the crowd, and the suddenness and impetuosity of the irruption of the cavalry, rendered it impossible for the people to open a passage. There is an unconscious simplicity about the remainder of the sentence, which is quite amusing: "a great dust arose, when they (the yeomanry) quickened their speed, so that I could not distinguish all that passed; and certainly, I did not see one person struck with the sabre." Why not? Mr. Philips shall answer for himself. Because "I could not distinguish all that passed." The letting-off of this negative evidence, reminds me of the story of the Irishman, who, when half a score persons swore, that they had seen him commit a certain theft, claimed to be acquitted upon his trial, because he could produce ten times as many who did not see him: like Mr. Philips, I did not see "one person struck with the sabre," though, it was not the "dust" which prevented it, but a more potent reason; inasmuch as I had left the ground some minutes before the yeomanry came. The number of sabre wounds that I have since seen, is, however, ample proof that many were given. And several persons, whose credibility is to not be impeached, at least, by Mr. Philips's negative evidence, have distinctly sworn, either that they were wounded themselves, or saw wounds inflicted upon others, before the cavalry arrived at the hustings. There is no evidence, which deserves a serious refutation, to prove that any stones were thrown at the cavalry, before they reached the hustings; though it is assumed by Mr. Philips, as a point established, (page 58) that "no lives would have been lost, if opposition had not been made to the civil and military powers." What! did Mr. Ashworth oppose them? Did Mrs. Parkinson oppose them? But I ask for proof, that such "opposition" was made. Mr. Wheeler's story of the "long brats that contain

pockets," is too ridiculous to obtain credit ; like the parliamentary tales of the two cart-loads of stones, and the thrice-read riot act. It bears falsehood upon the face of it ; for the same money which would purchase " a brewer's brat," would have sufficed to provide some more efficient weapons of offence, than a pocket full of stones. Besides, nothing could give an air of tolerable plausibility to such a preparation, since no reason for it would exist, except an opinion on the part of the people, that they should be attacked. Had they anticipated the probability of that event, they would doubtless, either have come much better prepared for it, or kept at home ; believing however, as they did, that their meeting was legal, they could have no expectation of being disturbed. That any person should gravely assert, or, asserting, expect to obtain credit, that an unarmed multitude, amongst whom were many women and children, should attack a body of cavalry, armed with swords and pistols, is indeed to me astonishing.

But by what right were the yeomanry brought upon the field ? I think I have, in my remarks upon the parliamentary documents, proved, that the meeting was legal. That it was peaceable, I presume, will not now be questioned.

If therefore, the object were merely to arrest Mr. Hunt and his companions, why, but for the very determination to produce the consequences that ensued, were such instruments employed, or such a period chosen ? Mr. Hunt might doubtless have been found with ease when the meeting was over, and none of his companions who were named in the warrant, were likely to abscond to avoid its being served upon them ; indeed it is morally impossible that they could in any way be aware of its existence. Nor is the execution of a warrant for misdemeanour (the warrant does not, I am assured, allege *any* distinct fact of illegality,) a matter of such importance as to justify the putting in danger the lives of such an immense multitude

of people. But, even if Mr. Hunt and his companions be guilty to the full extent to which crime is imputed to them, I cannot think that the consciences of the Magistrates would have been less at ease, whilst I am sure that the feelings of the country would have been less outraged, if the yeomanry had not been ordered to assault the people; and to arrest Mr. Hunt, without assaulting them, was under the then existing circumstances absolutely impossible. Again, if it were after mature deliberation thought necessary to arrest Mr. Hunt during the meeting, why was not the civil power in the first instance employed? No attempt was made to execute the warrant by its agency, and it would have been thought time enough by any discreet, or humane, or constitutionally disposed persons to call in a military force, when the civil power had been found unable to do its duty, or had been obstructed in the performance of it. Taking, therefore, all the circumstances together, I cannot but conclude, that it was *ab initio* intended to dissolve the meeting by force, and that the arrest of Mr. Hunt and his associates was merely the pretext by which the attack was to be justified. But, even though the meeting should hereafter be shewn to have been illegal, still it was illegally dispersed. That the Riot Act was not read I have proved (so far as a negative can be proved) already; and Mr. Philips admits he "did not hear it," but adds that he has "no doubt of its having been read, from the respectable testimony he has heard on that point; but certainly, it was heard only very partially." If Mr. Philips meant, that the country should take his statement as evidence of this fact, he ought to have told us, on the authority of this "respectable testimony," not merely that the Riot Act was read, but how, where, when, and by whom? The mere assertion, without a full and satisfactory explanation of all these points, is worse than trifling, because it aims at deception; and if the forms and intentions of the law had been com-



plied with, the opportunity of proving that such was the fact, must, I conceive, have been anxiously desired and eagerly embraced. The time has been, that evidence upon that point would have been most beneficial to the Magistrates ; but, though the police office has vomited forth its dregs to bear testimony in their favour, the reading of the Riot Act yet remains unproved.

It is not necessary for me to repeat the horrifying description of the scenes that ensued after the prisoners were arrested. They can never be obliterated from the memories of those who were fated to witness them. But Mr. Philips justly observes, that "For any individual to give a correct account of all the circumstances of that eventful meeting, from his own actual knowledge, is impossible." As I only witnessed the dispersion of it from a distance, I shall therefore, content myself with stating its results ; simply adding, that I can never forget the deep expression of terror and surprise depicted in the countenances of the poor creatures as they ran by me ; apparently scarce knowing where they were, or whither they should fly for safety. There are now upon the books of the Committee for the relief of the sufferers, 579 cases of injury, sustained on that day. Of these, 421 have already been authenticated by the strictest personal investigation, and the sufferers relieved. Amongst this latter number, there are 161 cases of sabre wounds. In every case in which the name of individuals has been put upon the list of the Committee, the injuries sustained were so severe, as for a greater or less period to render the parties unable to follow their employment. Amongst the wounded are 104 girls and women, and of these, a considerable proportion received sabre wounds, many of which were very serious. Of the parties who were wounded on that day, ten are known to have died, and as is believed in consequence of the injury they sustained. One man, who was severely wounded, has become insane, and one woman, who was also wounded, in a fit of insanity cut her

throat\*. That the number actually wounded was much greater than that which the list of the Committee exhibits, there can be no doubt, because many persons have endeavoured, from an apprehension of personal consequences, to conceal the circumstance of their having been present at the meeting. Several instances have indeed come under the notice of the Committee, where the knowledge of that fact, by employers, has caused to the poor sufferers the loss of their work.

Such then are the immediate consequences—such is the direct result, of the *glorious* victory of the 16th of August,—a victory obtained over whom? over our fellow-countrymen and neighbours; the most industrious—the most numerous, and the most useful class of our population—that class to whom we owe all our strength in war, from whom we must derive all our prosperity in peace.

Hitherto, my opinion of the conduct of the magistrates must be gathered from incidental observations, rather than from any direct or general statement. Of the yeomanry I have not yet spoken; but as Mr. Philips's pamphlet professes to be an exposure of the calumnies circulated, &c. against the Magistrates and yeomanry cavalry of Manchester and Salford; and as I have undertaken the task of answering that pamphlet, my opinion must necessarily be given. That I write under circumstances of considerable restraint, will be sufficiently obvious. It is an ungracious task, at all times, publicly to blame those who are our neighbours and fellow-townsmen; but at the present time to start a doubt of the humanity, of the prudence, of the impartiality, of the constitutional spirit, or of the sound judgment, of the magistrates, will almost

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\* As soon as the investigation of the cases is completed, a full and accurate list of the sufferers, containing a statement of the wounds and injuries received by each, and the length of time they were severally disabled, will be published by the Committee. This will enable the public to decide whether the atrocities of the 16th of August have been exaggerated or underrated.

be held to be seditious. However nauseous and fulsome the adulation which may be offered as incense to their vanity, it may yet be imprudent to reply to it; and when the rage of political hostility has instigated human passions to a deep and stern vibration, the "small still voice of truth," prompting to manly and independent investigation, is scarcely ever heard amid the storm.

The comments which I have made upon the parliamentary documents, will exhibit my opinion of the conduct of some of the Magistrates in individual cases. With respect, specifically, to the transactions of the 16th of August, it is generally understood, and I am assured it is capable of proof, (though for that, I do not pledge myself) that there was a considerable difference of opinion amongst the Magistrates themselves, as to the propriety of calling in the military *unless some actual breach of the peace were committed*. Certainly, my estimation of the character of some individuals amongst them has been very erroneous, if the deeds of that day received their *unanimous* approbation. But, however that fact may be, that there are amongst the Magistrates, individuals of the most violent political character—men, who most unwillingly concede to those who differ from them the liberty of manifesting their opinions, and who sometimes use language upon the bench more fit for the orgies of a Pitt-club—is beyond dispute\*. That there are some, whose circumstances render it but too probable, that they look to the good things at the disposal of Ministers, as the reward of their devoted services, is also undeniable†. That

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\* Rev. C. W. Ethelston, on the case of David Kay, (see Times of Sept. 27th,) "I believe you are a downright blackguard reformer. Some of you reformers ought to be hanged, and some of you are sure to be hanged—the rope is already round your necks; the law has been a great deal too lenient with you:—(*addressing the clerk,*) I will have no bail for this ruffianly crew, unless they have some money."

† One of this class of worshipful persons, to whose name the epithet of "*Miss*" is frequently affixed, and who a few years ago gave an excellent specimen of the



there are some, the avowed founders and patrons of Orange Societies, the organizers and supporters of a system of *espionage* of extent far greater, and of consequences more tremendous, than in any other district in the kingdom, is also too true; whilst that there are *any* distinguished for the possession of clear and comprehensive judgments, of sound constitutional information, of liberal and enlightened opinions, of superior acquired knowledge, or of great natural talents, I have yet to learn.

But though there can be no doubt, that the Magistrates sanctioned the proceedings of the 16th of August, I am inclined to believe, that it is not to them that we are to look, as the original instigators of the tragedy of that day. There is a committee appointed, I know not how, and consisting of I know not whom; but which arrogates to itself the title of the "Committee to strengthen the Civil Power." Judging of this body from its conduct, I am led to believe, that it consists principally of the waning remnant, or the few apt successors, of those whose bigotry and prejudices caused the riots of 1791 and 1792. That bigotry and those prejudices now, however, operate differently, for they have no longer the populace on their side. But as the people are not now to be incited to violence against the friends of freedom, it is an effort worthy of the same actors, to stir up prejudice, and suspicion, and distrust, against the people themselves. I do not mean to say, that these persons do not think they are "doing the state some service;" but I am sure we in this district were in a much more tranquil condition before they afflicted us by the incumbrance of

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correctness of his taste, by quoting *Greek to a Manchester Pitt-Club*, hit upon a notable expedient for putting down Mr. Hunt. He proposed to take him into custody, on his return from Lancaster, as a *vagrant*, on the ground that he had *no visible means of subsistence*; to confine him seven days in the New Bailey, *flog* him, and pass him out of the parish. His colleagues, however, were not quite so far gone as to fall in with this plan.



their protection\*. However honestly disposed they may be, their acts render it sufficiently evident, that they are men of the most violent party feelings; that they do not possess that cool and discerning judgment which is requisite, by a scrupulous and diligent investigation of the nature of evidence, to enable them to elicit the truth;—that they are not nice as to the description of agents they employ, being predisposed to decide against the people; and finally, that they assume to themselves the most improper and unconstitutional power, actually placing the whole neighbourhood in a state of complete and hitherto unheard of *surveillance*†.

From this anomalous self-constituted committee, many of the affidavit-makers, on the 16th of August, were,

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\* When Mr. Hunt returned from Lancaster, in the end of August or in September last, his friends decreed him the honour of a public entry; and great crowds went out to meet him. In his way into town, it was necessary that he should pass down New Bailey Street, and over the New Bailey Bridge. The hour for his arrival being made known, a little before that period the scavengers' carts were sent down to block up the street, in order that the progress of the procession might be obstructed. The day happened to be very wet, and the procession was therefore much behind its time; the consequence of which was, that after the poor scavengers had got drenched with rain in waiting for it, they were sent home. Whether this judicious plan was adopted for the laudable purpose of preserving the peace, or (considering the end to be answered,) the still more laudable one of creating a riot, it is for the public to decide. The credit of the happy thought belongs however I believe to the "Committee to strengthen the civil power."

† The following document will sufficiently prove this assertion.

"Public Office, Aug. 18, 1819.

"At a numerous meeting of the 'Committee to strengthen the Civil Power,'

"Joseph Green, Esq. in the chair,

"It was unanimously resolved,

"That, in order to secure the most correct intelligence possible, the Committee recommend to the Boroughreeve and Constables, that the following gentlemen be requested to give them the earliest information of any *extraordinary* appearances in their respective neighbourhoods."

Letter accompanying the above resolution:

"To Mr. ———

"SIR,

"The present aspect of political affairs, rendering an arrangement for early and authentic information, a measure of the highest importance, I am directed by the "Committee in aid of the Civil Power," to transmit to you

I believe, taken. Of its members, was the meeting which thanked the Magistrates and Yeomanry for their conduct, in part composed. Being heartily desirous that tranquillity and confidence may be restored amongst us, I entreat, as a preliminary measure, that the members of the committee will rest from their labours\*.

With respect to the conduct of the Yeomanry, on the 16th of August, I am decidedly of opinion, that considerable misapprehension has existed. That the greater part of the corps are actually incapable of acting with deliberate cruelty, it gives me pleasure to state my belief; but it is at the same time necessary to add, that by far the greater proportion of those cases, in which it is ascertained by what body of military wounds were inflicted, the yeomanry are the corps named. In order to account for this, it may be remarked, that they were first upon the

a copy of a former resolution referring thereto, and to request the favour of your continued attention to the object of it.

“ I am, sir,

“ Manchester,  
“ Nov. 19, 1819.

“ Your's very respectfully,

“ MATTHEW COWPER.”

No. 2.

“ SIR,

“ As it is considered by the ‘ Committee in aid of the Civil Power,’ that *the crisis is near at hand, when the Radicals probably may attempt some measures of violence*, I am desired again to refer you to the resolution of the 18th of August last, and to request your attention to the objects contained in it, and particularly to make an immediate communication of any unusual appearances in your neighbourhood.

“ I am, sir,

“ Yours very respectfully,

“ MATTHEW COWPER, Secretary.”

“ Essex Street, Manchester,  
“ 22nd Nov. 1819.  
“ To Mr. ——— ”

\* Since the text was written, I have ascertained that amongst the members of this committee are several of those members of the yeomanry, who were most active on the 16th of August. The country will see the strong interest which these persons have to obtain evidence against the people, in order that it may operate in their own justification, and will therefore know how to estimate whatever statements can be supposed to emanate from them.

field—they alone went up to the hustings—they alone took the flags and caps of liberty—and they alone were known to, and consequently can be identified by, the people. It is also beyond question, that there are in the corps individuals, whose political rancour approaches to absolute insanity; who before the meeting threatened what they would do; and who, reeking from the field, boasted of the feats they had achieved; who have openly avowed that their intention was to assassinate Mr. Hunt, and expressed their regret at not having effected their purpose. My decided opinion, therefore, is, that a few individuals inflicted all the wounds which have been attributed to the Yeomanry as a body. It is also true, notwithstanding the extraordinary gratuitous disclaimer of Col. Dalrymple, that in several instances both officers and privates of the hussars did interfere to stop the carnage. At least, this fact has been vouched to me by so many persons, totally unconnected with, and unknown to, each other; and as having occurred at such different parts of the ground, that I cannot for a moment hesitate to say, I am fully assured of the fact.

I have omitted to mention, that after the field was cleared (this fact I now introduce, because it has not been dwelt upon so much as it appears to me to deserve,) the yeomanry mustered again near Mr. Buxton's house, waved their swords and cheered in token of triumph. That waving of swords I saw, those cheers I heard, and the sight and the sound smote heavy on my heart. For I could not have supposed, but that the dispersion of the assembled multitude would at least have been felt as a painful duty. I could not have supposed that the wounds and sufferings they had been the agents to inflict on their unarmed countrymen, would have been regarded by the Manchester yeomanry as a matter of exultation and rejoicing.

Some further observations yet remain to be made, respecting Mr. Philips's pamphlet. I am not the advocate of Mr. Hunt. There are many of his principles, in which I do not agree, there is much more of his conduct of which I do not approve. But it is impossible not to be disgusted at the wilful and perverse misrepresentation of his meaning, which is manifested in the interpretation given to that phrase in his address, "Put them down and keep them down." Mr. Philips first mentions this, page 6, of his pamphlet, and he repeats it, page 47; in both instances asserting or insinuating that the expressions were used in reference to the constables and yeomanry; adding in a note, page 47, that he is told, on the authority of a very intimate friend, that "from the rancorous manner in which they were uttered, Mr. Hunt strongly reminded him of Kean, in King Richard." Now, notwithstanding all "the inundation of falsehoods, which filled many of the London prints," (page 49) but of which, Mr. Philips, I believe, has scarcely mentioned one; the public will agree with me, that a gentleman who attended upon the hustings, without any connexion with Mr. Hunt, whose business it was to render a faithful report of the proceedings, whose means and capacity of doing so must be improved by constant practice on similar occasions, and who, from personal knowledge, I have the pleasure to say is well qualified to give a true and incapable of giving a false statement of what passed, is more to be depended upon, (to say the least) than any person who has given to Mr. Hunt's meaning the same direction as Mr. Philips's.

In the report of the proceedings in the Times, that part of Mr. Hunt's address is given as follows. After having for some time vainly endeavoured to obtain silence, Mr. Hunt said, "Will you be so obliging as not to call silence, while the business of the day is proceeding, (*silence was then obtained.*) He hoped they would now exercise the all powerful right of the people, and if any



person would not be quiet, that they would put him down and keep him quiet." This was at the very commencement of his speech, from which it is evident that the yeomanry were not then come upon the field, did not make their appearance for a considerable time afterwards, and consequently *could not* be alluded to by Mr. Hunt. This assertion is fully confirmed by the report of Mr. Hunt's speech, in Wheeler's Chronicle of August 21st. Indeed the plain and obvious meaning of his observation, which it requires strong prejudice to misconstrue, or great assurance to pervert, is, that if any persons should attempt to render the meeting illegal, or to interrupt its peaceableness by attempting to raise a disturbance—that they should be put down and kept quiet; a piece of advice about the propriety of which, I should think there can be little difference of opinion. With respect to his "rancorous" manner, I believe no man can have the smallest chance of making himself heard by 50,000 or 60,000 people, without a vehemence of manner, which those who are so disposed may easily persuade themselves is "rancorous."

Mr. Philips, after alluding to the depraved licentiousness of the press, which statement, as it involves matter of opinion quite as much as fact, I shall not notice, proceeds page 9. "Schools had also been established for the avowed purpose of inculcating defiance of all government, and contempt of *all* religion." I have already stated, in my observations on the parliamentary papers, the utter groundlessness of assertions such as these, and I now merely return to the subject, for the purpose of expressing my surprise that, in a town where a school exists, respecting which this charge has been made—in a district containing several others which have been similarly spoken of, any person could be found who would subscribe his *name* to a statement not only without the slightest foundation, but for which there is not the slightest pretence. I of course

cannot be wrong in taking it for granted, that the schools here referred to are those founded by the reformers and called "Union Sunday Schools." And it is not merely upon empty assertion, but from an examination of all the books used in these schools, and of the course of instruction and religious exercises pursued there, which have been personally made by two of my particular friends, whose veracity is beyond the reach of suspicion, and whose judgment cannot be imposed upon, that I charge this statement to be a gross and absolute calumny. Let Mr. Philips personally examine the schools at Manchester, at Macclesfield, at Oldham, or at Stockport, and then let him, if he can do it, impeach the correctness of my assertions. The fact is, that these schools are in the hands of persons of strict religious character, and warm religious feeling, and that no political publications are ever read there\*.

I cannot conceive in what manner this charge can have been trumped up against the "Union Sunday Schools," unless it be that the "Union Societies" have, for the purpose of feeding political enmities, been wilfully confounded with them. But the latter are associations of grown-up persons, not of children; they are professedly and exclusively political; and as it is unquestionably equally untrue, to assert of them, as of the schools, that they "inculcate a defiance of *all* government and contempt of *all* religion," I have yet to learn, that they are less respectable or less legal, than Pitt Clubs or Orange Societies.

With respect to the sharpening of the Yeomanry sabres, about which so many observations have been made,

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\* The only exception, (and indeed it can hardly be called one,) to their statement, of which I am aware, is at Stockport, where some of the writing copies contain short abstract sentences of general political application; and some few, having reference to the transactions of the 16th of August, must have been wholly attributable thereto.

Mr. Philips says, (page 17,) “ On the 7th July, government issued orders to the Cheshire and Manchester Yeomanry Cavalry, through the Lords Lieutenant of those counties, to hold themselves in readiness, and *consequently* most of the Manchester Cavalry sent their arms to the same cutler which *the corps had employed during the last war*, to put them in condition ; this was a month *before* the Manchester meeting of reformers had been advertised.” Now, the corps *could not* have employed this cutler *during the last war*, because it was not then in existence ; and with respect to the purpose for which the swords were sharpened, that will be rendered sufficiently plain, by a reference to the letter of the five Manchester magistrates to Lord Sidmouth, which is the first in the series of parliamentary documents, and wherein they state, under date of the 1st of July, that “ a meeting is expected to be held here on Monday week,” that is, the 12th of July ; so that these facts confirm the conclusion, that it was specially with a view to the then next ensuing meeting of reformers, whenever it might be held, that the swords were sharpened. And that this measure should have been so long in progress, and indeed required by a printed circular, gives it a character of deliberation and forethought, which, had it been adopted merely on the spur of the moment, would have been wholly wanting. I know, however, that some of the Yeomanry swords were not taken away from the cutler’s until the 14th of August.

I have really been surprised at Mr. Philips’s frequent and flat contradictions of his own assertions. One instance I have before given ; again he says, (page 19,) of an extract from one of Mr. Hunt’s speeches, that it is an admission that “ the people, or (not to strain the point) a considerable proportion of them, *might, if they chose*, have been armed at the meeting ; but lie, Mr. Hunt, was too politic a general ; he well knew that the Magistrates

had taken every precaution to prevent surprise and devastation, and that, in addition to the regulars and the Manchester Yeomanry, the whole of the Cheshire legion were to be in attendance." Now this passage I take to be an admission on the part of Mr. Philips, that the people were *not* armed, and indeed it is madness to suppose that, knowing of all the immense military preparations made—the infantry, the cavalry, and the artillery, in attendance,—that they would come armed to the meeting, because they could not have a moment's expectation of making a successful resistance, if they should be attacked, and would have no object in being armed, if they did not expect to be molested. But in direct opposition to this, Mr. Philips says, in speaking of the Blanket Meeting, (page 6,) that *then* the people had "no public leader," *who had distributed his orders as to their resistance*; and (page 47) that "his (Mr. Hunt's) body guard had locked their arms together, in one compact *impenetrable* phalanx, and he had given his orders, (alluding to the constables and yeomanry,) *to put them down, and keep them down.*" That is, that he, who "was too politic a general" to advise the people to come armed to the meeting, because "he knew, that in addition to the regulars and Manchester Yeomanry, the whole of the Cheshire legion were to be in attendance," yet "distributed his orders, as to the resistance of the people;" which said resistance was to be accomplished by their taking hold of each other's arms, and thus opposing to the onset of this tremendous military force, "*an impenetrable phalanx!*"

It may be observed in addition here, that the extreme density of the crowd, by preventing the people from stooping down to pick up, or from using their arms to throw stones with any degree of force, even supposing that *they* had them concealed on their persons, proves, incontrovertibly, that resistance could not have been made by the people, until they had been illegally assault-



ed—until the compactness of the crowd had been lessened by their partial dispersion, and not until they, consequently, had a legal right to use all the resistance in their power. From the formidable list of officers, privates, and horses, both in the regulars and yeomanry, who are *said* to have been *struck* by sticks and stones, on this occasion, I believe it would not be possible to select *three* individuals, who sustained *any* personal injury. The two horses wounded by sharp instruments, were, I am assured by persons who saw them, cut by the sabres, either of their riders or others of the military, of course unintentionally.

At the conclusion of Mr. Wheeler's account of the meeting of the 16th, which Mr. Philips has introduced, the latter says, in speaking of it, (page 39,) "All the material points appear to me to be given with fidelity; nor have I reason to distrust *any* of the minutiae." This is a most extraordinary assertion, after Mr. Philips has, in at least half a dozen places, pointed out, in notes upon Mr. Wheeler's Narrative, the errors, inaccuracies, or mis-statements it contains. I have no intention of entering at any length into the account of this meeting, as given in the Manchester Observer. I shall just, however, notice one circumstance, which I consider decisive of the question, as to the attempts which are alleged to have been made, to exaggerate the results of the affair.

Mr. Philips says, (page 49,) "It was necessary for the Observer to keep in some degree within bounds, in his first account of the killed and wounded; had he swelled out the number, as he has since done, the falsehood would have been too palpable. It would have injured the sale of his paper; his customers had been disappointed and humbled; the game was as nearly up as possible." It has been often remarked, that the early reports of an affair, made whilst the blood is warmed, and the passions are excited, generally exceeds those which cool

investigation proves to be correct. But it is a remarkable proof, not only how desirous the reformers were to avoid any charge of exaggeration, but how disposed they were to give the military credit for greater forbearance than that to which they are entitled to lay claim, that, in none of their narratives of the dispersion of the meeting, were the wounded calculated at so much as one half the number to which they really amounted. The Observer and the Manchester Gazette both stated them at *two hundred*, whilst the list of the Committee renders it certain, that there were very nearly, probably there were more than, six hundred.

Mr. Philips says, (page 50) “ It appears almost *miraculous*, that soldiers could be employed, and do so little injury.” The soldiers employed on the Blanket meeting day, although the number of persons assembled was at least half as great, *at the field* did none. At any rate, no lives were lost *there*; nor is it clear, although the affirmative was mentioned as a report, in Cowdroy’s Gazette, of the 15th March, 1817, that *any* persons were wounded. Mr. Philips’s *miracle*, therefore, like most others now-a-days, only wanted examination to be disproved. That the military *could* have done more mischief, will not, however, be questioned. Instead of using their sabres, they might have fired their pistols. But it is to be remembered, that this was a first, or (taking the Blanket Meeting as a precedent,) only a second experiment, and it was not prudent, either for Magistrates or military, to proceed too far, lest they might unfortunately find, to their cost, that they had calculated too securely upon the favour and *complaisance* of the law. I have no doubt, however, that if the records of the various courts of law, (I would rather have said *justice*,)—of the Grand Jury—of the Manchester Magistrates—of the Coroner—of the Warrington Magistrates—of the King’s Bench—and of the House of Commons, had exhibited any previous in-

stance of such an extraordinary, though *of course*, fortuitous concurrence of decisions favourable to the Magistrates and Yeomanry, the carnage of the 16th of August would have been much more dreadful and extensive, than that which the whole kingdom has even now joined in reprobating.

Mr. Philips, alluding to the loss of lives on the 16th of August, asks, (page 51,) "Where is the Briton, a magistrate, a constable, a soldier, or a citizen, that does not sincerely lament each of these calamities?" I presume Mr. Philips means this interrogation to be taken *abstractedly*, for I do not suppose that the person, who on quitting the field, (page 24,) "went up to an officer of the Manchester Yeomanry, whom he knew, and thanked him from his heart for the *admirable* conduct of his corps;" and who afterwards in "writing to distant friends an account of the proceedings of the day, expressed in each letter the most *unqualified* approbation of the sound judgment displayed by the Magistrates, and the *excellent* conduct of the Manchester Yeomanry"—I say, I cannot suppose that such a person, so expressing himself, could feel any *absolute* regret at those fatal results which he considered almost "*miraculously* few, and which, therefore, were the unavoidable consequence of the "sound judgment" of one party, and the "excellent conduct" of another, to neither of whom had he any "idea that blame could *possibly* attach."

Mr. Philips says, (page 26,) "A cause must be a bad one, that requires the slightest reservation; one that would stand in need of such a subterfuge, if I know myself, I should be the last to defend." For the sincerity with which Mr. Philips makes this statement, I give him full credit; but I yet am unable to reconcile it with the interrogation, (page 51,) "Is the wilful and premeditated murder of Campbell, the constable, under circumstances of barbarous atrocity, to be regarded as nothing?"

It is difficult to conceive, unless it be that all Mr. Philips's information in this case is derived from the Manchester Chronicle, that he could be ignorant that, hours before Campbell was attacked, he had been firing a pistol *loaded with ball*, into the street. As I have noticed this case at length, in my comments on the parliamentary papers, it is not necessary to repeat the particulars here. I am as much disposed to lament the death of Campbell as Mr. Philips can be ; but be it remembered, that it happened subsequent to the attack made upon the people on the 16th of August, and that the declarations of the mob, who assailed him, pointed to some supposed violence of which he had been guilty on that day.

It is perfectly ludicrous to see Mr. Philips assert, (note, page 53,) that "the Radicals studiously conceal, or make light of, every death or wound occasioned by the regulars." I am not aware, that the death of any person wounded on the 16th, has been more spoken of, than that of Joseph Whitworth, of Hyde ; with the exception of that of John Lees, which excited more attention on account of the inquest. But when he speaks of the "total dereliction of feeling in those who have been so *clamorous* about the lives which were lost on the 16th of August," he had better have established the truth of his assertion, on the authority of some few of his "innumerable proofs," than have excused himself from it on the stale plea, that it would be "a waste of time."

Mr. Philips says, in reference to the Lancaster and Chester Grand Juries, (page 54,) that "the lists of their distinguished names, given in *the Appendix, No. 19*, will, to every intelligent or liberal mind, convey the assurance, that the liberty of the subject could not have been intrusted to safer hands." The question is not about the liberty of the subject, but the impartial and due discharge of their own definite functions ; viz. to decide rightly, whether by the *ex-parte* evidence of the prose-



cutor, such a *prima facie* case is made out, as that the accused person shall be called upon to answer the charge. Now, knowing as I do, the positive evidence which was submitted to the Grand Jury, having myself seen and heard the testimony of several persons who were examined before them, my opinion as to their conduct certainly will not be changed by any reference to "their distinguished names."

Mr. Philips describes as fully, and decides as directly and unhesitatingly, upon Meagher's case, as though he had been present, and seen the whole affray. I cannot, however, give him credit for entire accuracy. The evidence being positive, as to the wounding of the two poor men, by Meagher, it was unquestionably the imperative duty of the Magistrates to have committed him for trial. It certainly was not proved, that he ever was assaulted, though it was sworn that one or two of his men were. That occurrence, however, took place hours before the firing. He also fired three times, instead of twice, as Mr. Philips intimates. And let it be remembered, that though his landlord swore to the fact of stones being thrown before Meagher fired, he would not swear that any windows were broken before that time. And with respect to the breaking of the lamp, the evidence was positive that that was done by Meagher himself. Where the whole proceedings on the part of the defendant in court, were contrary to law (and that they were so, I believe no lawyer of character in the kingdom will deny,) it is useless to start particular objections. But it was impossible to be present during the *examination*, without seeing that the whole police of the town was enlisted on the side of the prisoner\*. And several of the prosecutor's witnesses

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\* It is worthy of remark, that Mr. Norris, the stipendiary Magistrate, purposely absented himself from the Bench, during Meagher's examination. On one occasion, I saw him come into court, whisper to the presiding Magistrate, and then withdraw. Mr. Norris being a lawyer by profession, probably might have prevented the irregularities complained of, if he had not deserted his post.

were threatened by some of the police runners, in order to prevent their coming forwards. As a precedent, (if it would ever be permitted to form one,) this case is most seriously injurious\*. It completely abrogates and supersedes the functions of a jury; and though the wounded men may still indict, the prisoner would go into court, not upon the intrinsic merits of the case, but with the fact, that the Magistrate, after hearing evidence on both sides, had dismissed the charge completely in his favour.

I object too (if after stating the fundamental and absolute impropriety of the conduct pursued, it be worth while to mention a minor circumstance,) to the personal competency of the individual by whom this decision was made, as I cannot but think that a gentleman who had to be taught at an expense of some hundreds of pounds, that a potatoe was a vegetable, is not very well qualified duly to appreciate the force and bearing of evidencet, and consequently not fit to act in *propria persona* as a jury.

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\* An attempt has been made, to quote this case as a precedent already. In the Dublin Evening Post, of Nov. 23rd, 1819, will be found, the examination of a person named Smith, on a charge of stealing money from a collection-box, at a charity sermon. From the report, it appears that the accused was a warden of the church, where the transaction occurred; and upon the examination his counsel wished to produce proofs of his insanity. This being resisted by the counsel who appeared for the prosecution, Mr. Perrin, the prisoner's counsel, quoted the case of Meagher, to prove his right to give evidence in defence upon the examination before a Magistrate. —Counsellor Greene, for the plaintiff, then said, "If the case be as has been stated, I declare, for my part, that the proceedings are, in my opinion, illegal, and against the law and constitution; that the Magistrates have usurped the power of a petit jury—a power that not even a grand jury have any controul over," &c.

Counsellor Cole, (the presiding Magistrate) "perfectly agreed with Mr. Greene, that *no testimony given by witnesses on behalf of the prisoner, should be brought forward, so as to carry any weight with the Magistrate.*"

† On the 16th of October, I was in court at the New Bailey, during part of Meagher's examination. It was of course to be expected, from the circumstances of the case, and from the hour at which the outrage occurred, that the witnesses would be of the working classes. They were so. Several had been already examined, and another, a female, had just entered the witnesses box, when the magistrate for a short time left the bench. A lusty man in black, who had the *appearance* of a gen-

Whatever degree of guilt may attach to the Radicals, (page 55) for presuming to disbelieve that Nadin was shot at, I confess myself to be equally implicated. I cannot think that any person intending to hurt him, would have aimed at his head ; or that, the pistol being fired so close to him, as that the flash from it (note, page 53) should "burn the fur on his hat," he could have escaped being wounded. I very much question whether there are in the town more than about fifty persons, including Mr. F. Philips and sundry old women, who are not sharers in the blame of my obstinate incredulity upon this subject.

I have, except when I have been immediately replying to some observations of Mr. Philips's, confined my notice of the conduct of the magistrates and municipal authorities, to what took place previous to the 10th of August. Into subsequent matters I have not yet entered. But in order to afford a proof how very distant their conduct is from that of cool, cautious, and unprejudiced, persons, I shall remind my readers that on the 17th of August, which was Tuesday, and consequently the principal market day in Manchester for cotton goods, &c. ; one of the constables came upon the exchange about eleven o'clock, and in the utmost agitation ordered that the room should be closed, and declared the town and neighbourhood in a state of open rebellion.

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tleman, was standing near me, when looking towards the witness he addressed a genteel looking person at my right hand ; "See, see, there's another of them : what a parcel of d——d raggamuffin scamps these witnesses are. If he had shot a whole troop of them, he would have done no harm, by God." This observation, which made my blood boil, was *assentingly* received by the person to whom it was addressed. Had the magistrate been upon the bench, I should have spoke to him, and stated the language I had heard uttered ; but before he returned, the person had left the court. During the woman's examination, she made an assertion which seemed not to please the *gentleman* to whom the brutal speech I have quoted was made. Upon which he cried out, "eh ! what a d——n——n lie !" I afterwards discovered that this was the very respectable witness, Mr. Davis, as Mr. Wright called him, who swore that when he heard the stones thrown at Meagher's windows he was "*on his knees at prayer in a back room,*" which looked quite the opposite way from Meagher's lodgings.

The following hand-bill was also partially posted, but soon afterward it was rapidly pulled from the walls.

“ Manchester, August 17th, 1819.

“ Half-past 11 o’Clock, A.M.

“ The Boroughreeves and Constables of Manchester and Salford do hereby caution all the inhabitants to close their houses, shops, and warehouses, and to keep themselves and all persons under their controul within doors, otherwise their lives will be in danger. Carts and all other carriages must be instantly moved from the streets, and other public roads.”

In the report of the approach of pikemen, which caused this intimation, and which completely put a stop to business for that day, besides creating very considerable alarm, and subjecting persons of true constitutional feeling to the unpleasant sensations arising from the parading of military about the town, and from seeing artillery planted at the bottom of one of our most frequented streets,—there was not one syllable of truth\*. There are persons who have conjectured that conscience had something to do with the apprehensions exhibited upon the occasion, inasmuch as that certain parties could not disguise from themselves what they deserved to suffer that day, for what they had done the day before.

The opinion of the country has been so strongly expressed with respect to the treatment experienced by Mr. Hunt and his fellow prisoners on their examination, contrasted with the indulgencies which extended towards Meagher, that it is useless for me to enlarge upon that subject. Nor shall I do more than just notice the petty

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\* A ludicrous incident occurred on the evening of the 23rd August, about seven o’clock; when a quantity of gunpowder accidentally exploded in a gunsmith’s shop in Market-street. There was a considerable shock from the concussion of air, and rather a loud report. Instantly the cry was raised that the Radicals were coming, and some *wisecracks* ran for Mr. Norris the magistrate to read the Riot Act, whilst others sent for the soldiers. Such are the operations of those whose conduct betrays a ridiculous compound of folly and fear.



spite of sending Mr. Hunt off to Lancaster immediately after his examination was closed, when it has been promised that bail should be taken any time that evening, and notice of bail had been accordingly given.

The proceedings at the Lancaster assizes, and the extraordinary determination of the grand jury to take into their consideration the bills *against* Mr. Hunt and his companions, before those preferred by Mr. Hunt's friends against certain of the yeomanry and of the police officers, although the latter were presented to them before the former, are circumstances sufficiently familiar, and perfectly intelligible to the public.

When, by the ignoring of the bills presented at Lancaster, and by the refusal of the Manchester Magistrates to grant warrants against members of the yeomanry respecting whom charges were laid before them, it was rendered almost doubtful, whether any means would offer, by which the whole question respecting the peaceable demeanour of the meeting of the 16th of August—its legality, and the unlawfulness of the manner in which it was dispersed,—might be brought before the country upon oath, the death of John Lees took place at Oldham. The summoning of the Jury was in the usual form, though perhaps, from its having been done in the first instance by the coroner's clerk, it might have been considered irregular in that respect, had not the jury been sworn by the coroner personally before the examination of the witnesses commenced. At the outset of the business, the coroner made great professions of independence, the emptiness of which was, however, very soon demonstrated. Indeed, from Mr. JOSEPH DOWLING's short-hand notes of the proceedings at the inquest, the country will be very well able to decide, whether his conduct had any resemblance whatever to the upright and rigid impartiality of a judge.

Mr. Philips's promise to "restrain his investigation,"

with respect to the proceedings at Oldham, (page 49) is not perfectly in keeping with the next line but one, where he says, "never was there such a mockery of evidence—never was a solemn court profaned by such abuse." This was pretty well, whilst the inquest was still pending; but now that it is wholly nullified, it might not be amiss if Mr. Philips would enlighten the public by shewing the grounds upon which he has made these assertions, unless, indeed, they are to be taken as "*Vox et preterea nihil*,"—phrases, put in to construct a good sonorous sentence. Mr. Philips surely cannot deny that, in order to determine the quality of the act by which Lees met his death, it was necessary to ascertain the character of the meeting, to prove that it was legally and peaceably assembled, and therefore wholly under the protection of the law. This being taken to be established by proof, it then follows, that the meeting was violently and illegally assaulted; and Lees being, by medical testimony, stated to have met his death, in consequence of wounds which he was proved to have received, in the course of this attack upon the meeting; and it being impossible to ascertain by what individual the wounds were inflicted; it follows, according to law, (though probably not according to Mr. Philips,) that inquiry must be taken respecting *all* the persons engaged and co-operating in that illegal procedure, in consequence of which Lees met his death. For, if a number of persons in concert do an unlawful act, in the course of which one of them inflicts a wound which causes the death of an individual, they are by law *all* equally guilty of the crime of murder. Upon this point it may not be improper to give the authorities:

Plowden's Commentaries, vol. I, page 97-8; "All the other justices, (that is, except Bromley,) after advising thereof for two days, held clearly, that they might proceed with the prisoner at the bar, without any inconve-

nience arising from it. For they said, that when many come to do an act, and only one does it, and the others are present abetting him, or ready to aid him in the fact, they are principals to all intents, as much as he that does the fact: for the presence of the others is a terror to him that is assaulted, so that he dare not defend himself.— And then, in as much as both together, viz. the wounds, and the presence of others, who gave no wounds at all, are adjudged the cause of his death, it follows, that all of them, viz. those that strike, and the rest that are present, are in equal degree, and each partakes of the deeds of the other. And notwithstanding there is but one wound given by one only, yet *it shall be adjudged by law the wound of every one*; that is, it shall be looked upon as given by him, who gave it by himself, and given by the rest by him as their minister and instrument. *And it is as much the deed of the others, as if they had all jointly holden with their hands the club or other instrument with which the wound was given, and as if they had altogether struck the person that was killed.*”

1 Hale, 437-8; “If several are indicted, A as giving the mortal blow, and the others as present, aiding, &c. evidence that one of the others gave the blow, and that A only was present, &c. will maintain the indictment.”

1 East. P. C. 350; “So also if the evidence be, that J S, not named in the indictment, or even that a person unknown gave the blow, and that A, B, and C, named therein, were present, aiding and abetting.”

But amid all the strange ebullitions of party feeling, amid all the rancorous invectives of political opposition, I did yet expect to have seen such a degree of public decency maintained, as would have prevented an inquiry so solemn and so important, in every point of view, as that which came before the Coroner’s Jury at Oldham, from being spoken of as a “farce.” What, is the death of any individual, under any circumstances, a “farce?”



When that death is obviously by violence, is the cause not to be inquired into? And still more, when that violence has been accompanied by circumstances without parallel in the modern annals of British history, circumstances into which this whole nation has promptly and unitedly called for investigation, are those who endeavour personally to obtain it, to be assailed by obloquy and reproach? Mr. Philips says, "we have not a shadow of just complaint against any of the Magistrates, the constables, and military." We say we have, and state the grounds of our assertion. Mr. Philips says, they are "slandrous falsehoods, circulated by the vilest of the vile." Here there is assertion against assertion, and where statements so directly oppose each other, how, in God's name, are we to get at the truth, except by evidence in a court of justice, given upon oath? If Mr. Philips's clients be so confident of their innocence, they ought to be most anxious for inquiry; their friends, indeed, say they are so; but I heard little of this anxiety whilst the Oldham inquest continued. I can only conclude, that it is now loudly expressed, because it is known to be unattainable.

Where indeed are the sufferers of the 16th of August, now to look for redress? What avenue of public justice now remains open to them? By what course are they to bring the tale of their sufferings—to exhibit the nature of their wounds, before a jury of their country? Had an "*audacious*" radical trod on Mr. Philips's toe, there would have been no difficulty in bringing him to punishment; but, into a scene of military execution, in consequence of which ten persons at least have lost their lives, and nearly six hundred have been wounded, even *inquiry* cannot be obtained.

Perhaps, however, I may here have gone too far. Most happy indeed shall I be to find it so. For I am thoroughly convinced, that the existing dissatisfaction can never



be wholly removed, until the poor have regained that perfect confidence in the impartiality of the law—that feeling of individual security derived from its protecting influence, of which recent events have unquestionably deprived them. That this confidence should have been destroyed, deplorable as is the fact, cannot excite surprise. All to whom the proceedings of our local, and indeed of our higher courts, for the last four months, have been familiar, must have been painfully impressed with the conviction, that though the law is no respecter of persons, those to whom the administration of it is committed, are not always equally unbiassed. In presuming however that this conviction would be painful to all, I know that I have erred. There are persons in influential stations amongst us, who in my presence have spoken of the poor as “thieves,” and of those who have laboured to assist them in obtaining justice, as “scoundrels.” But to such I do not write. They are where I wish them to remain—in the ranks of my political opponents. I write to those only who are anxious that the impartiality of the law, like the chastity of Cæsar’s wife, should not even be suspected. I do not ask—I have never wished, to exempt the conduct of the reformers from the scrutiny and supervision of the law; but whilst I would make that law the punisher of their crimes, I would make it also the protector of their rights, and the avenger of the wrongs they suffer. If indeed, there be any class whose failings should be mercifully visited, and whose rights should be scrupulously upheld, that class is the poor: they are exposed to peculiar temptations, and they are most likely to err through ignorance on one hand, whilst on the other they are least able to protect themselves.

In the constitution of civil society, our duties are co-existent with our rights. When we resign part of that liberty to which in a state of nature we are entitled, it is for the purpose of being more effectually secured in the

enjoyment of the portion which we retain. We give up the right of retaliating the injuries we receive, only upon the condition that the law will avenge them for us. And if this be not done, if we suffer and the law afford us no redress, the implied contract by which society subsists is directly infringed, if not wholly abrogated. It is to the deductions from this reasoning, just though it be, that I look with the greatest apprehension, as connected with the dispersion of the Manchester meeting. The radicals have long been accused, God knows with how little truth, of a disposition to assassination. But what is so likely to create this disposition—what so likely to stimulate them to personal revenge, as the feeling that they are not protected by the law? If the law not only will not punish those who injure them, but will not inquire into their complaints against those by whom they consider themselves to have been injured, should we have any right to be surprised at their taking the infliction of punishment upon themselves? Is not the fact that they have not done this, a conclusive reply to all the slanders against them? And is it not infinitely more desirable that punishment, wherever it be deserved, should follow the cool and temperate investigation, and the just and impartial decision of the law, than that it should be inflicted upon the mere determination, and according to the private estimate, of those who fancy themselves injured? *This last sentence applies absolutely to the conduct of the Magistrates and yeomanry on the 16th August*, whilst fortunately its reference to the people is hitherto only hypothetical. If any of the people, on the 16th August, committed any crime—if there were any cause for complaint against them, it would have been right to take them into custody for the purpose of bringing them to trial; but it was not right upon a mere private and capricious interpretation of circumstances and their tendency,—without trial—without legal proof of guilt, to subject the whole mass to the dan-

ger of military execution. Why do men ever assassinate, but because they dare not kill openly? And if because they dare do it, they do kill by open violence, in what respect is the act less criminal than private assassination?

I was surprised almost beyond expression to find it asserted by Mr. Philips (page 59,) that this town "is now in a state of comparative tranquillity," and the credit of this tranquillity given to the measures of the 16th August.

Where, I ask, are these proofs of tranquillity to be found? Is it in the daily increasing number of barracks by which every district of the town is infested? Is it in the daily increasing number of troops quartered among us? Is it in the nightly perambulation of an armed watch and ward? Is it in the nightly piquets of foot and patrols of horse, almost as numerous as the streets they traverse. Is it in the fosses and bastions that now for the first time are seen amongst us? Is it in the subjecting of an extensive district to complete surveillance? Is it in the nocturnal deliberations of an uncontrolled committee? Or, lastly, is it in the announcement of anticipated rebellion?

Though the peace of this district has not been, and I am confident will not be, broken by the radicals, I cannot well conceive a more unfortunate assertion than that we are in a state of "comparative tranquillity," except it be that that tranquillity is owing to the measures of the 16th of August. He must be a bold man who would venture to assert that, at any period *before* the 16th of August, was there such a general excitation, such a real or pretended alarm, and such precautions against supposed danger, as we have seen for the last few weeks. For my part, I am no alarmist. I perfectly coincide in the opinion of the venerable Earl Fitzwilliam, that we need not and ought not to distrust the people; but yet I admit that I cannot contemplate without some uneasiness the conduct which the measures of the 16th of August were so obviously calculated to produce; I may say, in some respects, have produced. Until after that, period we had no authentic



statements that the people were procuring arms ; and, although I am of opinion that the accounts we have recently had of their arming, have been very much exaggerated, there is probably no reason to doubt that they have to a considerable extent provided themselves with arms as the means of defence. Hitherto, every man has undoubtedly had the right to carry arms, and that which is perfectly legal for every separate individual, cannot be contrary to law in an assembly. It is only when the purpose (not surmised or constructive, but proved) for which arms are carried, is against the law, that the carrying of them is constitutionally an offence ; and, though every friend of rational liberty, and of humanity, must lament that any circumstance should have occurred whereby the practice of arming has been rendered of more frequent occurrence, it is only right that the blame should fall where it is justly due, upon those who violently and illegally assaulted a peaceable meeting, which supposed itself under the protection of the law ; and not upon those who, injured and denied redress, have found it necessary to furnish themselves with the means of protection and self-defence.

That the poor have at former times been guilty, when suffering under severe privations, of conduct which no rational or honest man can attempt to justify, is certainly undeniable. But it is equally true, that notwithstanding the distress amongst the working classes has been quite as severe at periods since 1812, as it was at that time, no later demonstrations of hostility to the use of improved machinery have taken place amongst us. The rapid spread of political knowledge, and of the elements of political economy amongst the labouring classes, has taught them better than to impute their sufferings to the corn dealers when bread is dear, or to their employer when wages are low. I therefore cannot but think, in direct opposition to the opinion expressed by Mr. Philips in the commence-



ment of his dedication, that the actual disturbances of 1812 were far more dangerous than the *imputed tendency* to disturbance in 1817 and 1819. When the mind of the workman is inflamed, and his passions are excited against his employer, the bad spirit of revenge may be easily satiated. Neither the property nor the life of the latter may be secure, if the former be wicked enough to attack them. The frequent contact, the constant proximity, in which the two parties exist, necessarily afford opportunities of mischief to those who are on the watch to discover them ; and though death may be the punishment of the offender's crime, the penalty is no recompence for the injury he has inflicted. Unfortunately, in the year 1812, cases of this sort did exist. They were, however, very much exaggerated, and their circumstances much misrepresented ; but though extreme distress might afford some palliation for the conduct of the manufacturing population, it is beyond denial, that a very dangerous spirit was prevalent in several of the manufacturing districts.

I have already shewn, in one particular case, how the people were inflamed and incited by the agency of spies, and I have little doubt, that in other instances those miscreants were very active ; although, from the want of that investigation, which would have detected their proceedings, the circumstances have not been brought before the public. I am, however, of opinion, that even in 1812, great benefit would have resulted from the display of a conciliatory disposition. If an appeal had been made to the good sense of the people, if the advantage of machinery in sustaining our commercial pre-eminence, if the causes of the high price of food, and the utter inability of farmers or provision-dealers to reduce its value, had been clearly and forcibly explained to them, in a style suited to their comprehension, and with a sympathy suited to their sufferings, I cannot but think

that the period of disturbance might at least have been shortened, and some individuals have been saved from the last and greatest penalty of the law.

In the year 1817, the change which had been operated in the minds of the people was strikingly manifested by their conduct. Notwithstanding all that was said about the disturbances in this district, I have repeatedly and in vain challenged any person to prove, that the slightest disturbances existed. Not a hair of any man's head was touched, not an atom of any man's property injured by the people. The spies were amongst the poor, spreading devilish snares to entrap them ; they circulated the falsest statements, to encourage and stimulate to the adoption of their infernal schemes. Every means were tried, every attempt made, to induce individuals to commit themselves ; from the casual and whispered invitation to join in crime, to the threats of punishment and death, in case of refusal. But the people were proof against all, and notwithstanding many arrests were made, some under the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act, and some on definite charges, not one individual prisoner, from this neighbourhood, was brought to trial for any political offence.

I should have thought, that the knowledge of this fact, and known it is, would have materially lessened the credit to be attached to political accusations, coming from this neighbourhood. I should have thought, that no individual could be found base enough to hint at the existence of guilt, in a case where the accusers, prejudiced and embittered as they were known to be, durst not bring their prisoners even to trial. I should have thought, none could be found so wickedly diligent, as to rake together the fragments of exploded slander, to dig up its festering relics from the grave of their detected falsehood, in order to vilify the character and destroy the liberties of an industrious, a moral, and an intelligent

population. But the fact is otherwise. The Report of the Committee of the House of Lords, in 1817—that report which the very conduct of those, from whose materials it was constructed, proved to be utterly unworthy of credit, has been again brought before us, to give an extrinsic and adventitious support to that “pyramid of calumny,” by which the people are now sought to be overwhelmed. And where has this been done? By whom have these foul fabrications again been stirred into mischievous activity? In the House of Commons, and by Mr. Wilberforce and Mr. Peel. The scene and the actors are perfectly appropriate. The House of Commons adopts, with voracious eagerness, every extravagant and silly libel against the people, and refuses the inquiry that would prove these aspersions false. It turns a deaf ear to their complaints; and again refuses the inquiry that would shew them to be well founded. In both cases the people suffer.

Before I conclude, I shall just notice the great injustice which has been done to the religious character of our population. To hear certain worshipful, and honourable, and noble persons, talk upon this subject, one would suppose all the churches and chapels to be deserted, and all the people to have become infidels. But such notions as these only prove, how ignorant of the state of the country are those who undertake to legislate for it. Within the last three or four years, in Manchester and Salford, and the vicinity so immediate as to form a part of those towns, additional accommodations at various places of worship, have been provided, or are now fitting up, for not less than 12,000 persons. This, I conceive, with those who think Church and Chapel going indicative of religion, will be a sufficient refutation of the charges of an irreligious disposition, that have been so lavishly heaped upon the people.

The peculiar circumstances which have brought the



people and the local authorities so much into hostile contact here, are matters of difficult inquiry. I cannot pretend to do more than glance at what appear to me to have been the most operative amongst them. The existence of any political knowledge, or fixed political principles, amongst the poor in this neighbourhood, is of very recent date; and the lessons they have learnt are derived from the sufferings they have endured. When they were wondering that their situation did not improve with the return of peace, and anxious to discover the cause of their disappointment, Mr. Cobbett's masterly essays, upon the financial situation of the country, and the effects of taxation, in reducing the comforts of the labourer, first came before them. The cheapness of these publications ensured them a most extensive circulation; and the strong, clear, condensed, and argumentative style of the writer, was happily adapted to suit the capacity of the most numerous class of his readers. The influence of the more general diffusion of education, too, must not be overlooked. For the last twenty-five years, the proportion of those amongst the labouring classes, who have received the advantage of a good common course of English instruction, at the Sunday Schools, has been daily increasing. They have been continually amalgamating with that order of society to which they belong, and in the character of it they have now produced a general and radical change. The poor, when suffering and dissatisfied, no longer make a riot, but hold a meeting—instead of attacking their neighbours, they arraign the ministry; and, instead of asking for a *minimum* of wages, they demand a parliament in which their own legitimate influence shall be strong enough to fix the *maximum* of taxation. But, with this advancement of the poor, in the scale of political knowledge, a similar advancement on the part of the middle class has not been



simultaneous. The latter, before the peace, had a long course of comparative, or at least average, prosperity; they were busily occupied with their own private affairs; they read the details of foreign news in the columns of the public journals, but they did not interest themselves about the internal policy of their own country, or if they meddled at all, saved themselves the trouble of inquiring, by a general determination to "*support the government*," meaning thereby the ministry of the day. In political information, they, therefore, have been comparatively stationary; and when the steady onward progress of opinion has brought the poor to their heels, instead of attempting to preserve their own superiority, by taking a movement in advance, they turn round upon, and endeavour to repulse, those who have encroached upon the situation which they have been accustomed to fill; they deprive themselves of a fair advantage, lest a similar one should be taken by a class of whom they are jealous or afraid.

“ As Papists refuse

“ The Bible to use,

“ Lest flocks should grow wise as their guides.”

But the last two years have produced a considerable change—a change which is still going on, in the sentiments of the middle classes. They begin to find, that they *must* interfere with domestic politics, because politics *will* interfere with them; and where they have in any considerable proportion thrown their weight into the same scale with the labouring classes, a more conciliatory mode of conduct must be adopted, than that which has recently been in fashion.

Happy indeed would it have been, if a conciliatory spirit had uniformly been displayed. That great part of

the disturbances of 1812, and that all the restrictive measures of 1817, might thus have been avoided, I am perfectly satisfied ; whilst I am equally convinced, that but for the attack on the meeting of the 16th of August, those detestable Bills, which have now received the sanction of the legislature, would have been destitute of all pretence.

It is not a little remarkable, that before the second edition of Mr. Philips's pamphlet was published, I had fixed upon the very same occurrences, in proof of the advantage of lenient proceedings which he there adduces as demonstrative of their ill effects. Upon the facts of the case we are agreed. The spinners turned out for an advance of wages, and for a considerable time they marched "in military array," almost daily, through the town. So long as they confined their conduct within the limits of the law, they were not, and they rightly were not, interfered with. But, subsequently, their proceedings became utterly illegal. Not content with refraining from work themselves, they lay in wait for, and abused, those who wished to continue employed—satisfied with the wages they were receiving ; and when the masters of any factory, for the protection of the workmen who continued at their labour, fitted up beds, &c. to accommodate them within the mill, an attack was made upon the building itself. Those to whom the care of the property was entrusted, found it necessary to fire upon the assailants. One man was killed, and, I believe, two or three wounded. Here was a palpable and obvious riot, a manifest violation of the law ; every person engaged in the attack must have known he was acting illegally, and must have foreseen the probable result of his conduct. There was no speculation about "appearances" and "tendencies ;" the breach of the peace on the part of the mob was absolute and undeniable. The

consequence was, as might have been expected ; *public opinion sanctioned the proceedings it was thought necessary to adopt* ; and when the Boroughreeve and Constables of that year quitted office, they received the *unanimous* thanks of their fellow townsmen, for their conduct during the turn-out of the spinners.

Had the people on the 16th of August committed any act of riot, the measure of dispersing them according to the form of law, would have excited no disapprobation ; but when they had done nothing obnoxious to the known laws on one hand, nor were the provisions of the law, which would have operated in their favour, observed on the other, it is not to be wondered, that the public mind should be revolted, by the treatment to which they were subjected. The strength of all persons in authority consists, either in the employment of absolute force, or in the adoption of such moderate and discreet conduct, as may secure the influence of public opinion in their favour. That the former cannot be employed so as wholly to put down the latter, is, under the present circumstances of the country, sufficiently evident. It is, therefore, most highly desirable, that all persons in *official situations* should so restrain the force of private opinion and prejudice, should use their important powers with such unimpassioned temperance, as may enable them fully to rely on, and confidently to claim, the approbation of the thinking, the moderate, the intelligent, and the judicious, portion of the community.

That the Magistrates, who acted on the 16th of August, have not obtained the approbation of persons of this description, must be admitted by all ; nor can I conceive that any circumstances will be developed, either on the trial of Mr. Hunt, or upon any other occasion, which, as it respects them, shall convert “ censures into praise, and detestation into gratitude ;” or which, indeed, shall ope-



rate any change in the matured and deliberate judgment of the public at large.

In commenting upon the Parliamentary Papers, and in answering Mr. Philips's pamphlet, I have only discharged what seemed to me a duty, to the great body of my industrious neighbours and fellow-countrymen.—The people are unjustly appreciated; principally, because their character is imperfectly known. But I have no hesitation in stating it as my solemn conviction, that any individual of moderate political principles, of close observation, and possessing the previous knowledge requisite to enable him to make the comparison, would, after deliberate examination, feel himself compelled to decide, that no body of English peasantry is, for sobriety, good conduct, shrewdness, industry, and intelligence, to be compared to the mass of the manufacturing population which surrounds Manchester.—That there is none more susceptible of the impressions produced by kindness—none more disposed to pay proper respect to those of a higher rank, by whom they are treated with frankness, confidence, and good humour.

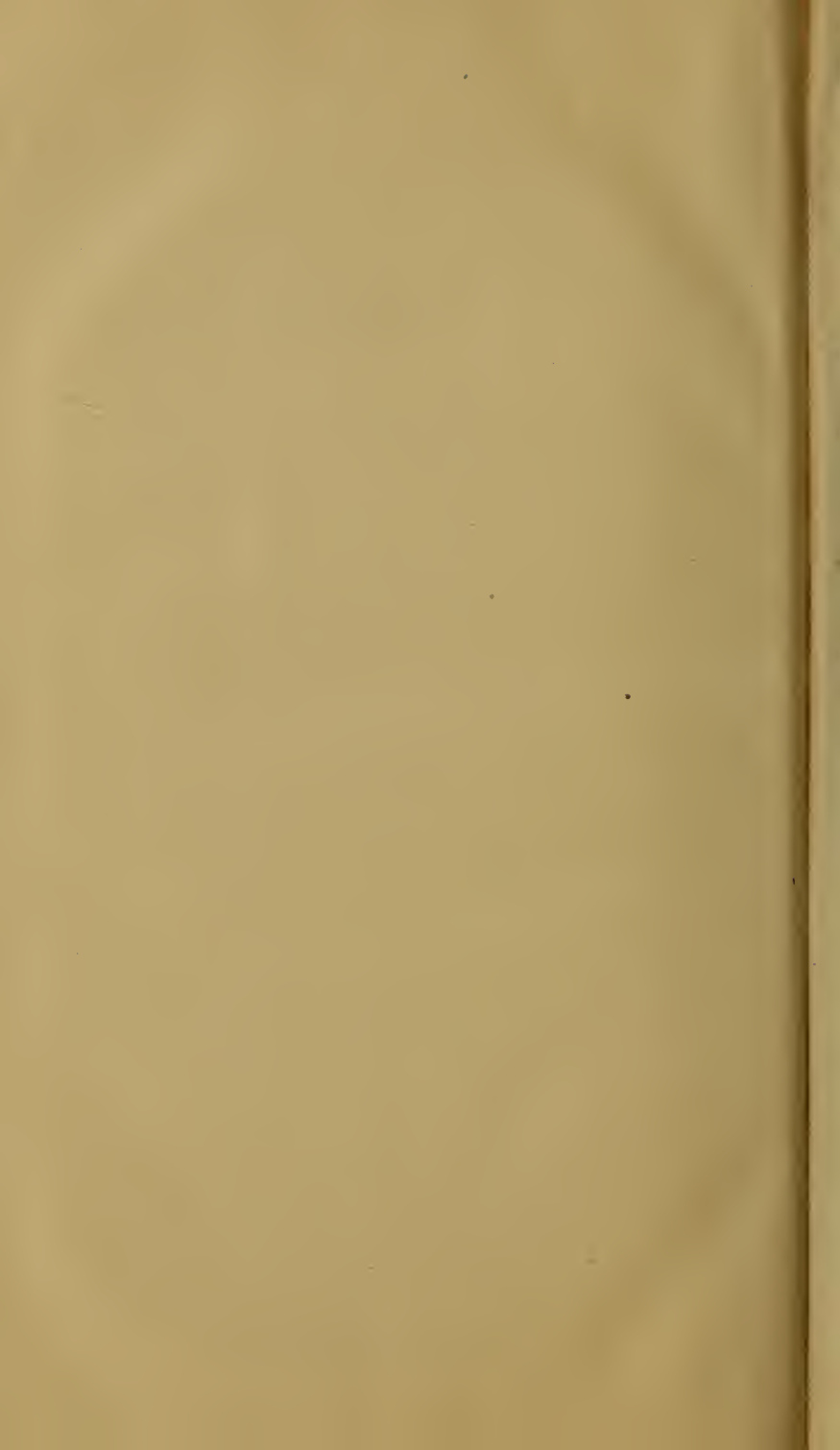
That circumstances should have long conspired to interrupt the friendly and cordial feelings, which ought mutually to prevail between the labourers and those of the class above them, to prevent that free interchange of acts of kindness, which each may find sufficient opportunities of rendering to the other, is very much to be lamented. But it is still more deplorable, that any occurrences should have taken place, to cause that fierce hostility—to create those bitter enmities and heart-burnings, which too many of each class now feel towards the other. Every friend of humanity, every true Englishman, without regard to party, must be anxious that this state of things may pass away, and that the

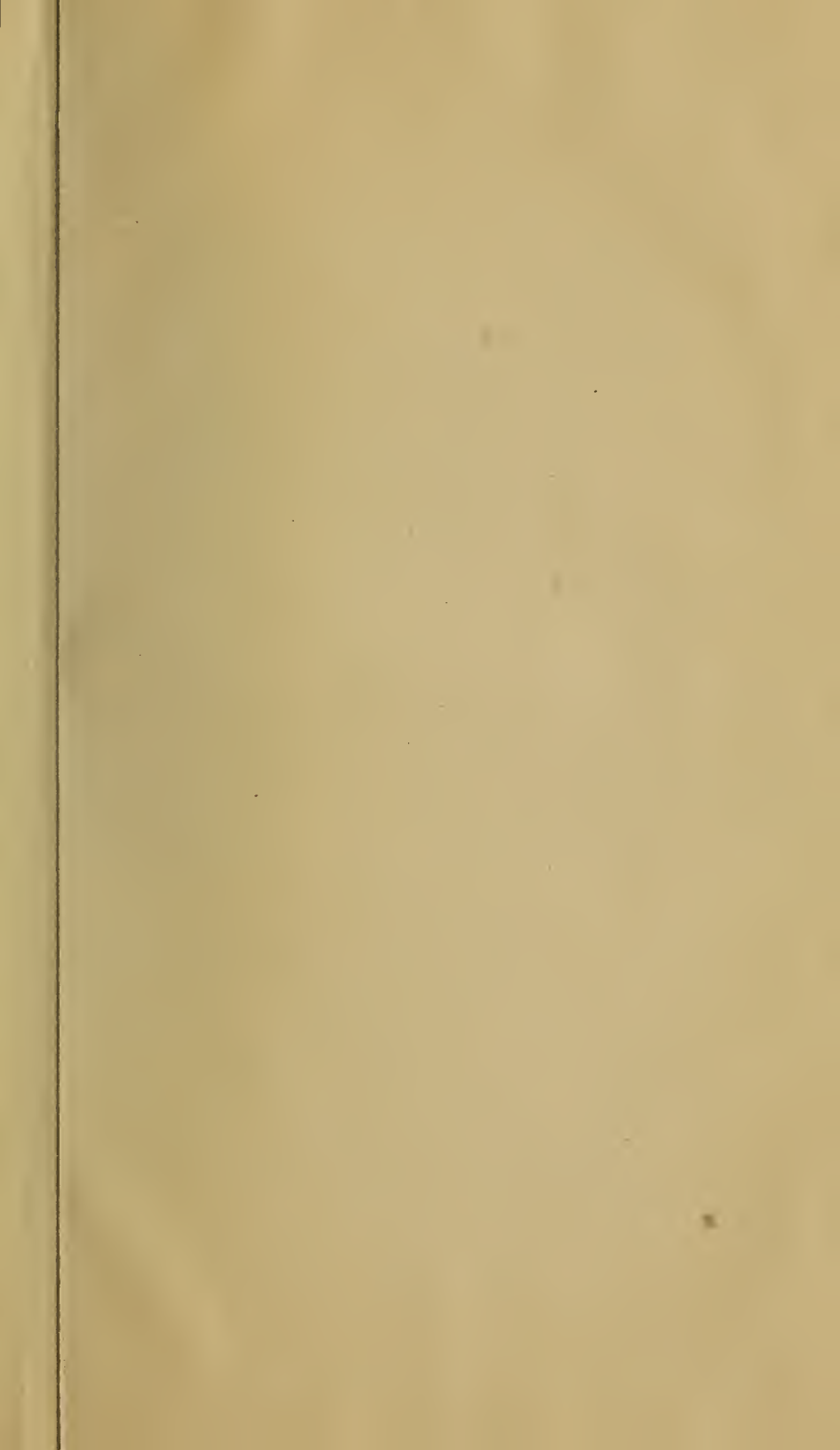


feelings best befitting fellow-countrymen and neighbours to entertain towards each other, may be speedily and permanently re-established amongst us. By none is this anxiety felt—by none will this “consummation so devoutly to be wished,” be hailed—with more full and perfect satisfaction than by myself.

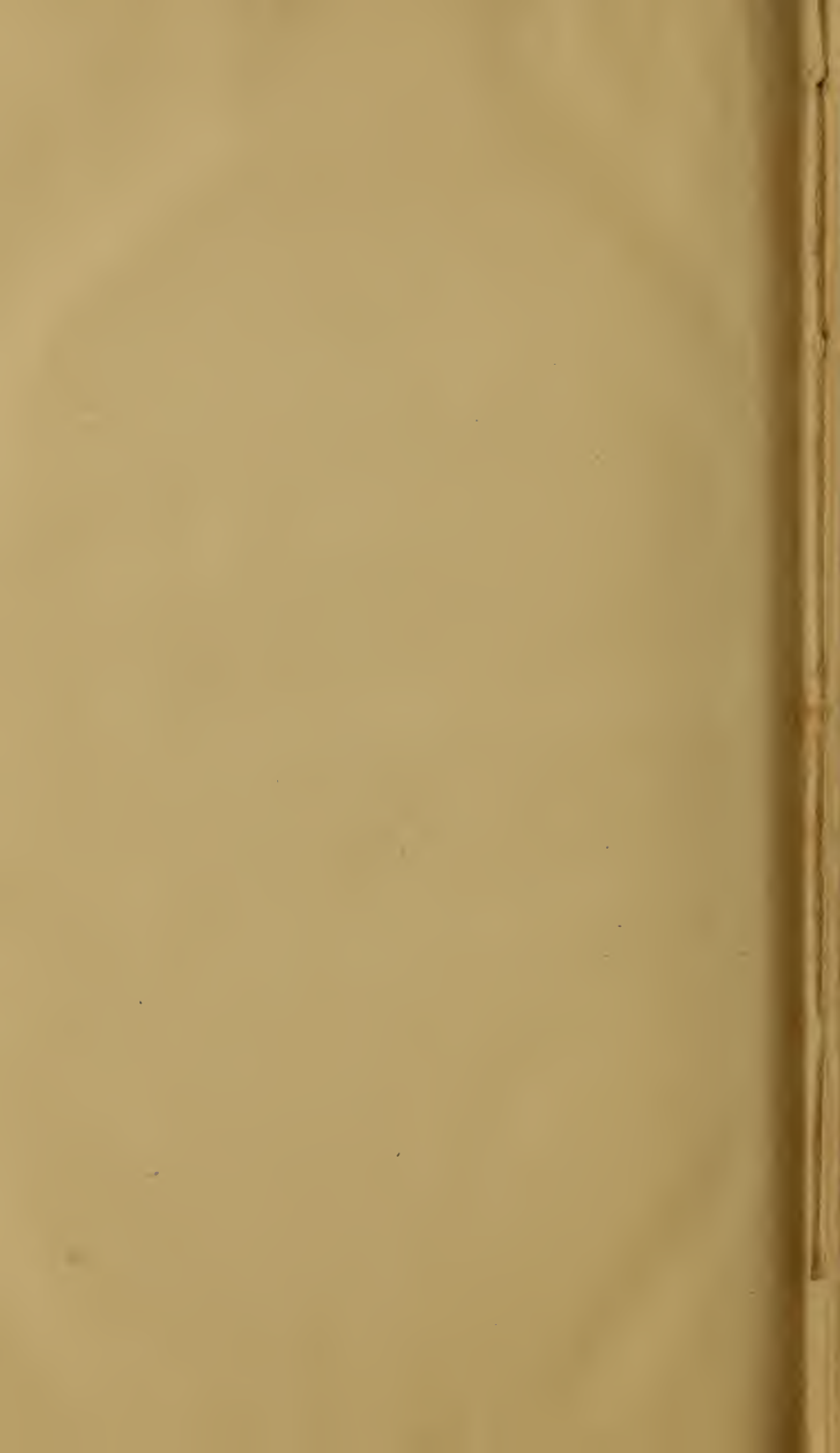
THE END.











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